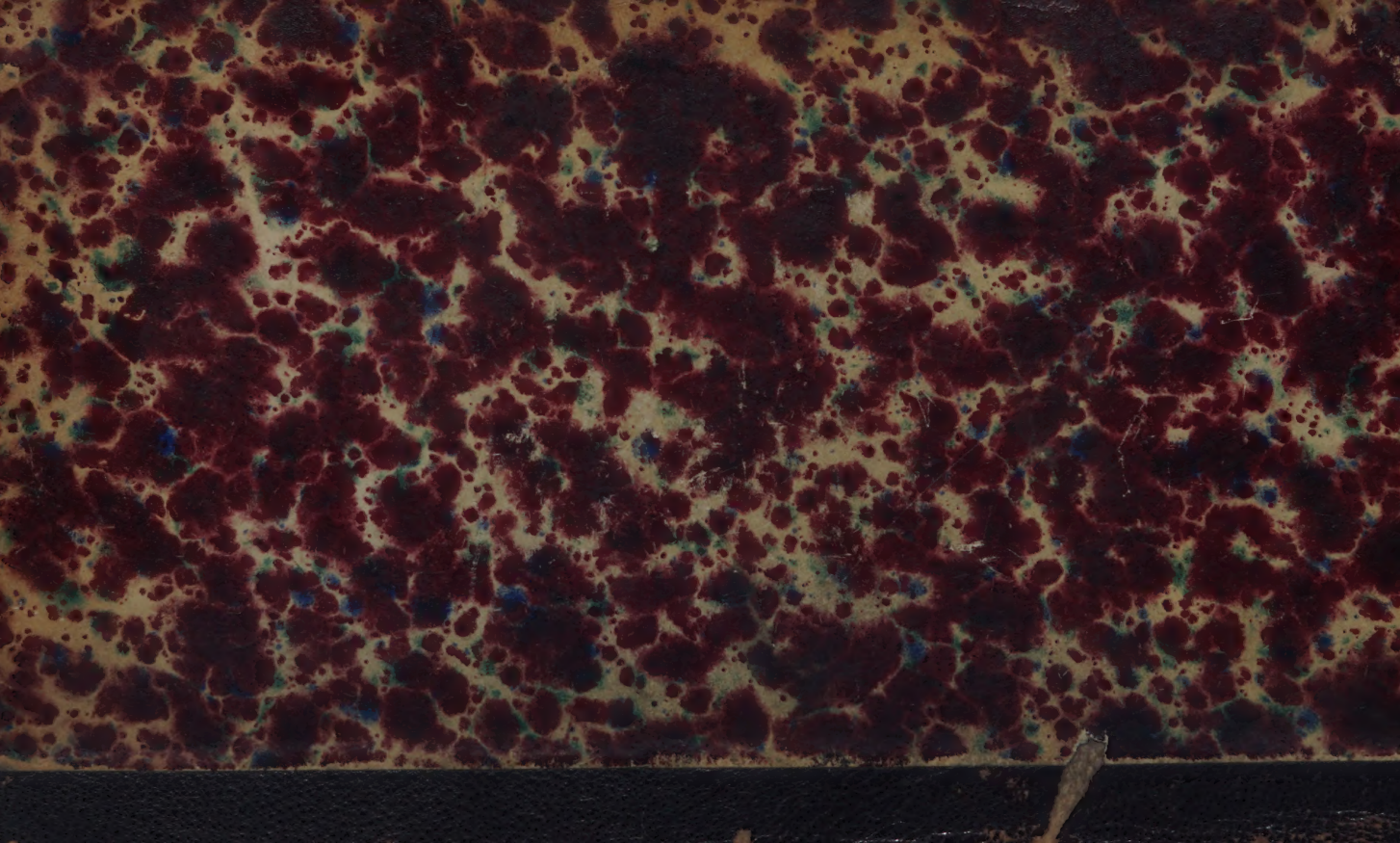

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MUSIC AND MANNERS

IN

FRANCE AND GERMANY:

A

SERIES OF TRAVELLING SKETCHES

OF

Art and Society.

BY HENRY F. CHORLEY,

AUTHOR OF "CONTI," ETC. ETC.

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"Praising all, is praising none."—*Burney.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE THIRD VOLUME.

PARISIAN AUTHORITIES.

CHAP. II.

FRENCH CRITICS. — THE ENTHUSIASTS.

George Sand.— An Evening at the Théâtre Palais Royal. — Mademoiselle Dejazet as *Suzanne*. — The two Stage Boxes. — A dubious Figure. — M. Calamatta's Portrait. — M. Couderc. — *Bon-bons*. — The Defenders of Madame Dudevant. — Her German Visitor. — Attack and Defence alike unfair. — Her strange Position the Result of Circumstances. — A Word on Religious Opinion and Moral Observance under many Revolutions. — Pantheism replacing Philosophical Denial. — Sketch of Madame Dudevant's early Days. — Her Passion for Art, an influence redeeming to herself, injurious to its object. — The calmest Minds the most learned and tolerant. — M. Berlioz — Where I saw him first. — The Box of *MM. les Journalistes*. — M. Mainzer. — Current Opinions regarding the Music of M. Berlioz. — His young Days. — His present Position. — The Influences he is likely to exercise - - Page 3

CHAP. III.

M. LISZT.

The Style of Music in Paris influenced by Rubini, Paganini, Berlioz, and Liszt. — M. Liszt as a Critic. — PAGANINI: ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEATH. By M. Liszt. — The Writer's Precepts borne out by his Practice. — The Influences of his early Career. — His Characteristics as a Pianist. — The Theory of Contrasts. —M. Liszt's Performance of Beethoven. — His Feeling for National Music. — What next? Page 34

CHAP. IV.

THE CONSERVATOIRE.

The touchy Point of the Parisian *Dilettanti*. — Anticipations of the Conservatoire. — News touching Handel, *Sir* Smart, and the Duke of ——, heard there. — Shabbiness of the Concert-room. — Dates of the Progress of the Conservatoire.— French Deficiency in Instrumental Composition.—M. Habeneck's Direction.— The Music I heard. — The Orchestra and that of our Philharmonic Concerts compared. — French Readings of Beethoven. — French Rage for Beethoven. — M. Batta's *Matinées*.—The Audience of the Conservatoire. — French Appreciation of Beethoven illustrated. — An Anecdote told to the wrong Person. — The Vocal Music of the Conservatoire. — Gluck, Rameau. — Conclusion - - - - - 54

THE LEIPSIC FAIR.

CHAP. I.

THE CONCERTS.

The Leipsic Fair a Tonic.—The Road from Berlin.—The Road from Frankfort.—Picturesque Towns.—Half an Hour at Weimar.— A Sonnet in the Frauen Platz.— M. Chelard.—Centralisation in Music.—A Word about Hummel and the Court of Weimar.— Aspect of Leipsic.—Its Advantages as a Residence for an Artist.—Arrival.—My Lodgings.—A Walk through the Fair.—Costumes.—Jews and Tyrolese. — A Modern Autolycus.—Unexpected Rencontres.—The Theatre of Leipsic.—Dr. Burney and Herr Hiller.—Mademoiselle Schlegel.—More French Operas. — "Les Huguenots." — Herr David's Leadership (and a Note touching Chamber-Music). — Dr. Mendelssohn Bartholdy. — The Subscription Concerts.—The *Programmes*.—The Directors.— Herr Rochlitz. — Herr Hartel. — Great Variety of Research; and its admirable Effects.—The Performance of Beethoven's Symphonies. — The Gewand-haus.—Crowded Audiences. — The Orchestra.— The Singers.—The Suppers after the Concert - Page 79

CHAP. II.

TRACES OF BACH.

The Chorus of the Concerts. — The Thomas-Schule. — The Thomas-Kirche. — The Interior reminding me of

"Quintus Fixlein."—A Mass in a Lutheran Church. — The Manner of Execution. — The old Days of the Thomas-Schule.—Music and Learning.—George Rhau. — The Reformation. — Luther a Promoter of Music, though an Iconoclast.— Slight Remembrances of Kühnau and Bach. — Music "of all Time." — Permanence a Characteristic of Bach's Style. — Bach still the Teacher in Leipsic. — Style of Music and Performance most relished in Leipsic. — Madame Schumann, with a Note on the "Kreissleriana." — Leipsic Taste accused by a Visitor of a Leaning towards the *Perruque*.

Page 109

TWO VISITS TO DRESDEN.

CHAP. I.

THE OPERA AND ITS ENVIRONS. — 1839.

Railroad Travelling in Germany. — A National Propensity. — The Spirit of Dresden. — A Quatuorzain written on the Bruhl Terrace. — The Sights and Curiosities of the Place. — The Music I heard at Dresden. — A Country Walk. — The Opera-House. — The "Euryanthe" of Weber. — Its Cast. — Madame Schröder Devrient. — Herr Tichatschek. — The Orchestra. — The ugly Chorus. — Sketch of "Euryanthe."—The Absurdity of its *Libretto*.—"Cymbeline" destroyed. — The chivalresque Spirit of its Music. — The opening Chorus. — The part of *Adolar*. — The part of *Euryanthe;* its brilliancy. — Her *Bravura* in the Third Act, and its Shaksperian Close. — Strong

Effect produced by the Music. — "Der May." — The Environs of Dresden. — Schiller's Closet. — Weber's Country House. — Pillnitz. — A Court Custom of Saxony. — Royal Amateurship (with a Note from Dr. Burney). — Strange Forms of Royal Patronage.
Page 131

CHAP. II.

ORGAN-PLAYING. — 1840.

Characteristics of the Organ. — Visit to Herr Schneider. — Inaccessibility of the Dresden Houses. — "In the body and out of the body." — The Sophien-Kirche. — Its Interior. — The Organ by Silbermann. — Its Sweetness of Tone. — Herr Schneider's Performance. — Bach's Fugues. — Improvisation. — Moral of the Instrument. — Sunday Morning Service. — *Corales*. — Admirable Accompaniment. — Henry Isak. — Catholic Church. — Cremona Violins. — Another Silbermann Organ. — Flatness of Diapason. — Morlacchi's Music. — Picturesque Group. — Artificial *Soprani*. — A Sabbath Thought in Dresden.
162

NOTES ON NUREMBURG.

Frankfort to Nuremburg. — Fellow Travellers. — A young Actress. — Her Airs and Graces. — Dettingen. — Aschaffenburg. — Autumn in the Forest of Spessart. — The Conquest achieved. — Victor Hugo and French

Rhythms. — Midnight at Wurzburg. — Breakfast at Emskirchen. — Wretched Inn. — Nuremburg. — First Impressions.— The Bayerische-Hof. — A Family House and its Motto. — Church of St. Lawrence. — Its Treasures of Art. — Relics of Catholicism. — Ancestral Pride. — The Frauen-Kirche. — The Burg. — The Joannes Kirch-hof. — Martin Ketzel's Seven Stations. — Stately Burial Ground. — The Tombs. — Walk home. — Nuremburg Theatre. — Scraps of Musical Anecdotage.—Paulmann.—The Gerls.— Meuschel.— Denner. — Modern Music discordant in Nuremburg.— Church of St. Sebald.— Rauch's Statue of Albert Durer. — Peter Visscher's Shrine of St. Sebald. — Votive Picture. — The Tucher Light. — Endowments. — The Moritz Kapelle.— The Rath-haus.— The Dole.— Group of old Men.— Münzer's Picture.— The Council Chamber.— Portraits of the Patricians. — Organ Music. — Walk through the Town.—A Peep at the Munich Opera. — The Reformation Fest. — Sunday in St. Sebald's. — Picturesque Congregation. — The *Corale*. — Lutheran Music in a Roman Catholic Temple. — Departure.

Page 185

PARISIAN CONTRASTS.

CHAPTER I.

SUNDAY MORNING.

Nuremburg to Paris. — Fellow Traveller. — Talk about Art. — Church *de la Belle Epine*. — *Fronton* of the Pantheon. — Notre Dame de Lorette. — Traffic in the

Temple. — Saints and Fashions. — The old Churches of Paris. — Figures to be seen in them. — A Wedding in Saint Germain l'Auxerrois. — A pleasanter Group. — A Lying-in-State in Notre Dame. — Criticisms by the side of the Dead. — A Note on the Restorations at St. Denis. — Church of St. Eustache. — Its Fête-day. — The Troubadour of a *Guinguette*. — High Mass. —M. Dietsch's Music.—Harp and Gong; with a Word on the intrinsic and associated Sacredness of different Instruments. — Connection of Art and Religion indispensable to the Production of the highest Works. — A last Illustration of the Union of Church and Opera.
Page 231

CHAP. II.

THE PALACE AND THE PEOPLE.

A few more Contrasts.— Morning in *Le Jardin des Plantes*. — Lablache at Dinner. — Evening at Madame d'Abrantes'. — Her melancholy Death. — Versailles, as sketched by Titmarsh: — as seen by me. — The old *Noblesse* of France. — Life for French Morals. — The Historical Galleries. — A few of their Curiosities. — A King of *Papier-maché*. — The Princess Marie's Joan of Arc. — Two Sonnets. — The Princess Marie and M. Edgar Quinet. — Architecture for the People. — The Dog-kennels. — Normal School. — Music for the People.—M. Beranger and M. Wilhem. — The Method of the latter — its moral Influences. — The *Halle aux Draps*. — The Scholars — their Behaviour. — Possible Results. — Quotation from M. Frégier.—Artistic Fruit

to be expected from the Musical Education of the People. — Truth and Purity the only solid Basis of Progress.—French Knowledge of Sacred Music.—The Influence of the People replacing that of the Palace. Page 257

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I HAVE already mentioned the novelist, George Sand, and the symphonist, M. Berlioz, more

than once, as foremost in the ranks of those who have contributed their thoughts and feelings upon Music to the French public. Here they must be sketched a little more in detail. While the one has more sincerity, and the other more knowledge, than the *feuilletonists* I have already mentioned, they exercise too much influence to permit of their being passed over, and possess too many features in common to be disunited.

The lady first, of course; though never was any one more willing to waive all the courtesies and *femalities* (as Uncle Selby called them) of the sex. For many years she would only plead her womanhood, when such an event as a summons to take a part in the service of the National Guard compelled George Sand to declare that the "doublet and hose" implied in her name were but "un symbole, un mythe," and that she was really nothing less or more than Madame Dudevant — a lady of old family belonging to the province of Berri — married without a will of her own, and who had pushed the consequences of such

treaty-work, theoretically and practically, to the most audacious extent.

It was during my second visit to Paris, two days after "Le Domino Noir" came out (to the English who do not take note of time by the theatre, I may say in November, 1837), that I went down one evening to the Théâtre Palais Royal, to see that most fascinating of ugly, middle-aged, cracked-voiced women, — the incomparable and impudent Dejazet! A new dramaticle, sufficiently absurd, had been written to exhibit her in all her glory. In the first act she was dumb; and, with a grace and airiness of pantomime I have never seen surpassed by even Fanny Elssler — that empress of the art,—went through the whole round of love-trial and jealousy. She had to endure the persecution of a *fat* (for the full meaning of which word inquire at the *petits spectacles* of Paris) and the subsequent terrors of a woman who sees her lover involved in a duel with a fool on her account;—and this with a wry fish-like mouth, and a hard tan-leather complexion telling of the rouge of years. But let no one set bounds

to a Frenchwoman's genius. She was a fourth Grace. The terrors aforesaid broke the spell of her dumbness in the most natural fashion possible, and let loose upon the stage the cataract of words which had for eighteen years been accumulating. Let one estimate the productive powers of a Frenchwoman's tongue! A legion of canaries in full song could not have more entirely filled the house with their ceaseless chatter; and, as burst after burst of delight in the exercise of her new gift drove the terrified domestics and kindred of the cured patient off the stage (any amount of alarm being justifiable under an infliction of such miraculous continuity), the sheer farce of the situation threw the audience into fits of that helpless diversion which finer wit often fails to excite. Even when the laughter, reiterated and long-drawn to the hysterical pitch, had ceased, and weary hands could applaud no more, there she was, talking still — the arrear of silence not paid off. Of her kind, there is nothing like Dejazet.

Yet, wholly to give myself up to that brilliant compound of impudence and ugliness was im-

possible to me, almost from the first moment of taking my seat. A comedy was going on in both of the stage-boxes, distracting to the attention. The Parisians could hardly keep their eyes on the stage, so much attracted were they by the imposing airs and graces of Mrs. ——, pranked out in "that Mussul-womanish mystery" — a huge scarlet turban, — her cheeks yet redder and rounder. Of more sober colour than Mrs. —— was *my* group in the opposite box; and yet I would hardly have exchanged its central figure for a revival of Madame Recamier herself after a dip in Medea's caldron, or a glimpse at any other of the perfect beauties whom the world has ever seen, beginning with Helen of Troy herself.

The figure was a man's in its habiliments, at least in the frock-coat, loose and faced with velvet, which covered its bust. In place of cravat, however, there was a dubious-looking shawl or silk handkerchief; and the throat and chin which rose therefrom had never been visited by razor. In short, either M. Calamatta's striking half-length portrait is a lie, or there sate George

Sand. There was the rich black hair, parted on the forehead just as M. Calamatta drew it; and there were the Sybilline forehead, and the eyes, melancholy in their sweetness, and sublime in their depth, and the gross Satyr-like lips and heavy jaw — the latter a little grosser and heavier than the artist has shown them. Either, then, the author of "Mauprat" has a double, or the original was before me; and I was free to enjoy one of those opportunities for unintrusive but close observation which, in some cases, is almost more desirable than personal intercourse. He must be very sure of his own talents and position who can approach a Byron, a Scott, or a De Staël, for the first time, without such a sense of inequality as throws restraint over powers of observation as well as over powers of pleasing.

I noticed neither the air nor the features of any of the gentlemen by whom the *Eidolon* was accompanied. It (for what other gender shall one dare affix?) was talking at its ease: in a low voice, tuned to that feminine pitch which separated it from the other male voices of the box. By hard listening, there are few

instruments in an orchestra — few tones in a crowd — which cannot thus be followed by an acute and practised organ. Feminine, too, was the motion of the mouth and lips — or I have watched, with a view of distinguishing the accents of the sexes, for some twenty years in vain. Feminine, too, the occupation; for I became presently aware that, whatever the tongue might be about, the eyes and the hands were carrying on a telegraphic communication with the person who occupied the *stalle* immediately before mine. A glance — and I had also recognised him. I had owed, indeed, too much of my past evening's pleasure to his grace and gentlemanly bearing, as the hero of the love-story of "Le Domino Noir," to have forgotten the features of M. Couderc. The Appearance was talking to him, I have said, as busily as eyes and hands could talk; and, whether by way of encouragement, defiance, or mere sport, the end was, that from a packet of *bon-bons*, worn in *its* pocket, *it* twisted up half a dozen in the corner of its "Vert-vert," or some other such waste leaf of paper, and launched

them at that particularly meritorious singer and clever actor. It was a woman's arm that threw them. It was a woman that I saw, ten minutes afterwards, glide past me in the narrow and stifling lobby, with a hat pushed over her eyes, with the slim waist, and the loose pantaloons — and the whole costume, in short, which has so scandalised many an English traveller; and is described with such a *dégagé* ease (a man never talks about what he wears) in one of the strange but eloquent "Lettres d'un Voyageur." *

* "We formed," says the writer, describing the arrival of the travelling party at Chamouny, "a group inextricably embarrassed; and not the less so, because the servant girl, amazed to see a figure so covered with mud, whom till that moment she had taken for a groom, embracing so fair a lady as Arabella, dropped her candle, and ran about the house with the news that 'Number Thirteen' had been taken possession of by a troop of mysterious, indescribable people, with hair like savages; where there was no making out which were men and which were women — masters or servants."

Again, after a beautiful and poetical description of the Fribourg organ: — "The Syndic inquired our names and callings. At every ambiguous reply of our malicious cicerone, the good and curious magistrate looked from

If any one choose to imagine that I journalised what I saw at the Théâtre Palais Royal under the influence of Vefour's Saint Peray, he is welcome; and, for once, I am not aggrieved. Home I went, strangely confusing the "Suzanne" upon the stage, with the Lelia off it, the ugly, brazen actress with the ill-starred woman—for Madame Dudevant is as ill-starred as Dejazet is brazen. Two evenings afterwards I mentioned in society what I had seen. I might as prudently have drunk Buonaparte's health in the days of my boyhood, when confusion to "the Corsican tyrant" was the established grace at the tables of all the orthodox gentry of ——shire! No less than three worthy scions of *La Jeune France* burst forth from their several corners in Madame la Comtesse G——'s *salon*, to shout down my innocent little anecdote. I had not seen Madame

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one to the other of us with doubt and surprise. 'And what have we here?' echoed the mayor, when my turn came, — 'Who is this oddity with a wet *blouse*, and in muddy gaiters, and with the two children between his legs?'"

Dudevant! I *could not* have seen her! She never wore men's clothes. It was an absurd English calumny. Two years later I could have quoted the testimony of a friend of my own, who had stood beside her when, in a like attire, she watched the preparation of the convicts for the galleys in the court-yard of a French prison. I could have told how one of the most distinguished of her countrymen had described to me, with all his usual grace as a *raconteur*, a visit she had paid him—hat on head, coat on body, boots on feet, and staff in hand — on her route to take fraternal counsel with M. l'Abbé Lamennais. But, unfortified then, save by her own confessions, and the floating tales wandering about the world, and eager to escape from a flood of eloquence as rapid but not so amusing as Dejazet's, I could but bow to the better knowledge of my instructors; having not the slightest inclination to do battle in behalf of what they chose so vociferously to declare was a dream.

I have since been much amused by a German defender and enthusiast in behalf of this re-

markable authoress, who has contributed his experiences to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. After declaring the object of his enthusiasm to be more womanly than many of the women of Paris who despise her, he proceeds to describe how she greeted M. Heine, the redoubtable author of the "Reisebilder," by passing her hand over (*Anglicé*, stroking) his hair; and how she challenged her Teutonic guest to a smoking-bout of paper cigars, which she had rolled up while the party were discussing strong questions — moral, theological, and philosophical.

By such partial observations as mine, and by such outrageous panegyrics as those of her defenders, who deny facts as established as the column in the Place Vendôme, one of the most remarkable writers and thinkers in modern Europe is alike wronged. The result of a lamentably distorted position can hardly fail, on the one side, to be a minute, perhaps an impertinent curiosity; on the other, an absurd and overstrained championship: here, misconception, wholesale abuse, and anathema; there, an apotheosis little more defensible than the deification

of the Goddess of Liberty as presented by some shapely *poissarde* in the days of Anarchy. How to attempt the slightest tracing of such a character, is a matter of much doubt and hesitation: yet the labour is worth the pains, because of the immoderate importance some are apt to assign to such influences as the writings of its object exercise; — because of the increasing disposition to examine and to canvass the principles of which, carried to their extremity, Madame Dudevant is the type; — and because, in the midst of much that is foul, and violent, and ignorant, and unjust, moulded by the will of Genius to take the semblance of what is fair, and serene, and wise, and all-seeing, there is a centre of sincerity worth looking at, wherever it can be ascertained to exist.

I have called Madame Dudevant's position lamentably distorted, since that which in England could but result from a terrible and unbridled proclivity to vicious indulgence, in France may have arisen in part from circumstances hard to overcome. The form which her energies have taken is but another illus-

tration of that state of society, of that unnatural, and (to the most latitudinarian eyes) ill-proportioned union of things religious with things sensual, of which "Robert le Diable" is the most vigorous operatic expression! At the time of the first Revolution, partly by the bitter wit of Philosophy, — partly by the shameless and wanton corruptions of Orthodoxy, cloaking its lusts and venalities and scepticisms under the hollow forms of decency, — Belief was utterly swept away. The nun and the priest, the Cardinal and the things of the altar, were dragged on to the stage to delight the grisly audiences reeking from the guillotine. The religious idea was gone: no one knew whither; — gone for ever, it might have been thought, if such a mathematical impossibility as doubt and eternity could co-exist. Napoleon, that deep searcher out of the springs of action by which men are moved — that unscrupulous employer of expedients, — endeavoured to revive it: but a church could no more be raised by his conscriptions, than the crown could be assured to his brow because a Pope placed it there! The

spells which insure conquest, and those which secure repose, belong to different schools of necromancy. The Bourbons, on their return, with a sincere and blind devotion, once again tried to reanimate the spirit of reverence: as if the old formalities and lip-services, so often prostituted to the worst uses in other times, could do any thing for a people which had become utterly hardened from indifference into licence. Yet the people was not wholly content to be without a religion. When another upturning came — another shock of the first great earthquake — not, indeed, the last! — after the convulsion had in some measure subsided, it was seen that in the newest manifestations of popular genius and intellect in literature and in art there was a tampering with Tradition — a reference to the creeds and sainted things of bypast times. No repose: but some earnestness — a stretching-out of the hands hither and thither, as of those who would say, "What shall we now lay hold upon?" The authorities and the *cimelia* of the ancient church were no longer objects of mockery, but of curiosity. The

literature of Philosophy was admired for its brilliant interference betwixt a profligate, hypocritical court and a bloated religion, and an oppressed people, rather than because it contained those permanent truths and principles on which the mind of a great nation can rest, and from which it can proceed towards knowledge and happiness. "To meet the exigencies of such a period of transition, the Spirit of Unbelief and Revolution, aware that the court-ruffles and *calembourgs* of the courtier and wit were a mode gone by, in imitation of his betters adroitly snatched up a priestly garment and a laurel crown, and began to announce a Millennium, wherein the earthly desires and the heavenly aspirations of all should be together and for ever gratified. No wonder that from the ranks of a society so impressible by nature, so lawless by habit, so shaken by reiterated convulsions, — yet feeling the state of lawlessness and convulsion intolerable, — a train of ardent spirits should start up ready to follow Mephistopheles when masquerading as an apostle; too thankful to embrace a mimic

creed which required so little from its professors, save the assurance to themselves that they were believing. Among these was a being, endowed with a like impetuosity of bodily temperament and poetical genius, masculine self-will and female mobility; the eloquence of a De Stäel, without her didactic earnestness; the *besoin d'être aimée* of Ninon d'Enclos, without the prudent coquetries which enabled that enchantress so long to maintain her enchantments: audacious in availing herself of the excuses offered by a loveless home and an ill-assorted marriage, to cast every tie of sex and custom aside; credulous in abandoning her whole self of passion and aspiration to a herd of men, who were all the more triumphant to number her among their sullied crew because she was young — a poetess, and a woman! Such, in a few words, was the time — such the manner — of Madame Dudevant's appearance as an authoress." *

Whether these premises be true or not, it is past doubt that, in the midst of a career noto-

* British and Foreign Review, April, 1839.

riously reckless, corrupt, and insolent towards every form and custom of social morals, — in the midst of a life of garret-orgies, and smoking-bouts, and strange random journeys, reflected in the works of George Sand, — we come everywhere upon confessions of weariness and agony, amounting to the "Si je pouvais prier!" of the chivalric prodigal of the Sicilian legend. We discover a willingness to rest upon what is sublime in Nature, and what is beautiful in Art: we encounter indications of a consciousness that Faith and Poetry are not utterly extinct. These, it is true, by all who measure life and its fruits but by one insular standard, may be thought the mere posture-making of a courtesan who is trying, in default of fresher graces, "to mimic Clarissa to the very life;" whereas they are the struggles and the yearnings of a mind which, though it has gone down into the mire, is not wholly base and filthy enough to remain there.

The intense personality which distinguishes Woman, when it would fain avail itself of shrewd reason and solemn eloquence to reconcile things irreconcileable, is a spectacle as painful as it is

repulsive to witness. No trickery can make us believe that a code of corruption is a new gospel which will supersede the old evangele of moral purity. But, while we regard the struggle with deep sadness, let us not forget the toils in which the victim was entangled. Let us not forget that there were such days as those of the Regency; — that there was a hollow epoch of etiquette, when a Dauphiness of France could not amuse her private hours as she liked without the sanction of a Dubarry; — that the gold and carved work of Throne and Altar were undermined by a set of men whom Philosophy could not save from devouring personal vanity and selfish sycophancy, and pulled down by a set of brutes who cared for little save their own gross lusts and ambitions, while they talked of Equality. Let us remember that the despotic career of the only man who could rule a land so terribly devastated had in itself the elements of destruction, and closed to be succeeded by an impotence worse than any disease. Let us remember that, under Regent, Republic, Emperor, and King, the old social usages have never been annulled: — the

institution of marriage, always considered as a heartless treaty, has gradually sunk to the lowest point of discredit: the old standard of Honour, nominally not pulled down, has been really moved hither and thither by the elastic shiftings of a jobbing spirit of expediency: — and shall we expect that, from a social chaos so wide, so deep, and so ancient, purity and beauty and order can spring, as by miracle, in the person of one who is no saint, but a self-willed and half-educated woman?

The devotion of such a being, in such a state of morals and manners, to Art, is not to be thought derogatory to the Spirit whose worship admits of such a ministry — but rather as exalting it to the dignity of one of those redeeming angels that withholds the soul from being utterly dragged down and swept away. While Birth could be only regarded by one in George Sand's position as

——— "a gossip's tale,
By blear-eyed nurses mumbled o'er the babe;
Scrawl'd on stale parchments — gilt on crumbling shields,
A dream — a phantom;"—

and Glory as a cruel and heartless splendour; and Faith enjoining moral observance as a crutch useful only to those who are feeble enough to be supported by it, — Art offers that very divinity, in the worship of which all the necessity for worshipping something may be gratified, without self-humiliation or superstitious reverence. Vague and poor as this is, it is better than the utter aimlessness of Doubt and Denial; the end of which is the ultimate dissolution of all Truth, and Beauty, and Virtue.

But while the influence of Music and Painting can hardly fail to produce gracious and ennobling effects on one so passionate and so world-weary, — leading the mind away from utter negation and discontent, and restoring to it those better emotions which soften, though they cannot purify, it is by no means so certain that the influence of natures and existences, in which all that is hateful and all that is love-worthy—"Beauty and ashes" — are so inextricably mixed, is beneficial to the health or well-being of Art. For when soundness and unsoundness are thus cruelly confounded, how shall the thinker come

at truth? His humility destroyed, and, with it, his power of learning, how shall he reach those immutable bases of precept and research which demand patient thoughts and calm lives? He will be too apt to torture Art to make it give up a meaning which his own disturbed mind requires: he will precipitate it into a lawlessness in harmony with his own life. At least, in the case of George Sand, — with the exception of a passage or two, such as the analysis of "Les Huguenots" I have translated, where a vivid and penetrating spirit seizes what may have been the *arrière-pensée* of the composer, and sets it before us with a rare force and clearness, — the whole of her poetical pages are given over to feelings rather than thoughts — to rhapsody rather than instruction—concerning Art. The balance and self-submission necessary for the thorough reception and firm hold of a subject so complex as Music, are wanting to her nature. I dare not say that the honest adoption of a creed would have made Madame Dudevant a critic of the rarest excellence; but I would declare boldly, that a disordered life, and a faith whose

moving principle is a feverish unrest — and which clings to all things because it will bind itself to none, —can but produce hectic judgment, and indiscriminating enthusiasm. It is not those who rule their own spirits who can least understand the fluctuations and vagaries of Genius. Because they are not carried away, they can contemplate all the more calmly.

Another example of enthusiasm called into action by revolution, and, in disgust of "creeds outworn," forcibly flinging itself into anarchy and disorder, is presented by the symphonist with whom the novelist is here coupled. In his art, M. Berlioz is as iconoclastic as George Sand in her intercourse with received things and ordinances. If it has been my disappointing fate never to hear a note of the music of M. Berlioz in Paris, it was my odd fortune to meet him for the first time in a place and a society as characteristic of his peculiar position, as a first sight of Gluck would have been if taken through the box-door of Madame St. Huberti — the fascinating *prima donna* of L'Académie Royale, who contrived to bring

about an amicable interview betwixt the composer of "Iphigenie" and his rival Piccini.

The critics' boxes at the Conservatoire are little larger than pill-boxes. To obtain a seat elsewhere, however, at one of those famed concerts was impossible; and it was with no common feelings of eagerness and anticipation that I repaired thither on a certain day in January, 1840. An old-fashioned dinner of four and twenty, round a table calculated to hold a baker's dozen (such as Hook would revel in describing dish by dish), or an old-fashioned journey in a six-inside coach, was hardly more of a squeeze than that couple of hours in the haunt of *MM. les Journalistes.* Fortunately, it was a bitter cold day;—had it been summer, the flare of the artificial lights hanging before my eyes, and the pressure from without of many beards, which seemed to sit over my shoulders, and in my pockets — here, there, and every where — would have made up a dear price to be paid for hearing even Beethoven's symphonies performed by the *soi-disant* most perfect orchestra in Europe. In such a masquerade of Orsons,

a smooth face is at a premium; and the one which in its smoothness paired off with mine was thoughtful and shrewd-looking, with eyes at once deep and keen, and a certain sad and sardonic expression, the coming and going of which had engaged me some time before I knew that it belonged to M. Berlioz. He was sitting, almost pressed out of his hard and scanty chair, by another of the fraternity. This was M. Mainzer.* Only in Paris could such a

* Polemics apart, M. Mainzer's musical criticisms have a depth and soundness which are excellent. His knowledge, too, of the elder schools of Music is extensive. He deserves, too, did space permit, to figure among Authorities of Paris, for the care and pains bestowed by him on an attempt at establishing schools for the working classes. This was carried out with a devotion and industry worthy of all praise: and one of the most agreeable evenings recorded in my Parisian journals of 1837 is the one I passed in his school-room, at the Place de l'Estrapade, where a large concourse of the street-public of Paris was singing part-songs most lustily and in good tune. I believe M. Mainzer's establishments have subsequently languished, partly from the interruption caused by the production of his opera, and partly from the superior share of public patronage and interest having fallen to the schools conducted on M. Wilhem's plan. Of these I have something to say in a coming chapter.

juxtaposition have presented itself! M. Mainzer (like Goldsmith's Dr. Rock) had but recently published a book to prove that the genius of M. Berlioz was but quackery, and his picture-music a monstrous combination of what was with what ought to have been impossible: and M. Berlioz (like Goldsmith's Dr. Franks) had only very recently retaliated, by laconically characterising M. Mainzer's "La Jacquerie," produced at the Théâtre de la Renaissance, as "the opera in the key of D!" There, in short, sate the romantic critic in all his formidable glory; and there sate the affronted upholder of classicism, more hurt by that one *mot*, than his antagonist had been damaged by his whole artillery of ninety-five pages. The situation seemed comical enough to an Englishman, used only to a state of literary intercourse in which, when bitter tongue and sharp pen may have fullest way, the anonymous is too often snatched up more expediently than honourably. Of the music of M. Berlioz I have no pretension to speak. Angry musicians tell me it is an *olla*,

without design or order, and the pompous announcement of its leading ideas not borne out by their own intrinsic values, still less by a single passage of construction. The more tolerant give it credit for grand orchestral effects, produced by a novel admixture of the instruments. On the other hand, the George Sands and Janins — the enthusiasts and the *feuilletonists* — rave about it as something too delicious for the uninitiated to enjoy; and dwell upon its very deformities with the same fond rapture as made sundry Wordsworthians select, as gems of that admirable poet's genius, the puerilities and crotchets which only youthful obstinacy, quickened by persecution and resolute to abide by a forced theory, could have originated or suffered to remain. Truth, of course, lies between the abuse and the apotheosis. Ten years of constant and persevering energy have given M. Berlioz a certain stability in Paris which it were nonsense to deny, and would be impossible to destroy. Whether ten years of more humble advancement along the beaten highways of Music would not

have conducted him further, even towards the originality which he has so incessantly agonised himself to reach, admits of some question.

Right or wrong, however, M. Berlioz is a type of Young France in his career and his criticisms — remarkable and worthy of study. Born in 1803, and destined by his father for the legal profession, he was early vexed by a passion for the art, which seems to have been strangely alimented. His Gluck idolatry, for instance, he tells us, was kindled by an arrangement, with guitar accompaniment (!), of some of that music which demands, if ever music did, scenic action and orchestral splendour. At an early period, he flung himself eagerly into the never-ceasing conflict between the old and the young schools—betwixt caution and self-will; and when he was about twenty, totally devoid of any positive knowledge of the art he was resolved to take by force, — on his resources being stopped by his father, he hazarded the manful step of engaging himself as a chorister at the Théâtre du Gymnase! Resolution and defiance seem to have gone together hand in hand through-

out his career. A musician he would be — but in his own way. He would submit to no learning of chords, and scales, and the movement of parts — to no step-by-step mastery of the nomenclature of a progressive and complicated science. Vague ideas of the grandeur of Gluck and Beethoven, — vague resolutions to start where they left off — to dispense with the forms he would never trouble himself by learning how to follow, — seem to have been his ruling principles. With all this, he made a certain progress. Having, in 1828, wrung from the Institute a second prize for composition, by a scene from "Sardanapalus," — which, in spite of its author's flagrant notions of revolution, must, in some measure, have *conformed*, to win for him any authentication on the part of so learned a body,—he was enabled, as a government scholar, to make a journey to Italy. But Italy contained nothing he cared to learn! and Germany, where "his bond," too, engaged him to pass a certain time, he disdained even to enter. French to the very heart — an upholder of romanticism in its wildest excesses — he re-

turned; sate down in the city of his election; and, partly criticising, partly composing — here venting a flood of vitriolic sarcasm, or a flight of high-toned poetry — there elaborating a march or a *scherzo*, which at least, by its strangeness, set all the world a-quarrelling; — by wielding now the pen, now the baton; — always peremptory, always egotistical; often presumptuous, often violent, — with a certain wild and chivalrous elevation of mind, and devotion to Art, to which a stormy and difficult career has borne testimony, — he has at last written and composed himself into a place of honour and regard at Paris; the singular result of indomitable self-will and unity of purpose.

Such a story is not without its attraction for all who love to see perseverance and resolution triumph. But the vagaries and inconsistencies into which such a career may lead, and in his case seem to have led, are so striking and dangerous as to make one wish that the church founded on its success should be a small one, and, as at present, confined to the talkers about,

rather than the participators in, Art. The series of M. Berlioz' criticisms, if read carefully, would puzzle any poor student past cure. He hates particular rhythms, and particular movements, under particular moons; he hates all melody when it is wrought out; and yet deifies Beethoven, who was universal, and whose magnificently copious works prove that he hated nothing. Gluck is set up as the only one prophet; Handel, Gluck's nearest co-mate in music, sneered at as a mechanist always formal, oftentimes frivolous. Passages of sarcastic acumen, sharpened by personal feeling, as in the case of the calculation of the gains of Duprez which has been given, are oddly mixed up with citations from Shakspeare, Oriental apostrophes, and epigrams which turn the thought entirely away from the primary object to the secondary influence. In short, viewed from a distance, M. Berlioz is a musician among the wits and rhapsodists, a wit and rhapsodist among the musicians: with all his audacity and energy and persistence, his poetry of pen and his grasp of aspiration, a

self-reproving anomaly, unless Chaos is to come again, and the *disjecta membra* of the quarry, or the heap of stones shaken down from some ruined temple, are to pass into a higher esteem than the perfect statue and complete shrine, in which Art has perpetuated beautiful thoughts by the agency of Truth and Science.

CHAP. III.

M. LISZT.

The Style of Music in Paris influenced by Rubini, Paganini, Berlioz, and Liszt. — M. Liszt as a Critic. — PAGANINI: ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEATH. By M. Liszt. — The Writer's Precepts borne out by his Practice. — The Influences of his early Career. — His Characteristics as a Pianist. — The Theory of Contrasts. —M. Liszt's Performance of Beethoven. — His Feeling for National Music. — What next?

How far the state of society and of opinion — the constant interference and influence in Art of a half-instructed class of intelligent minds — has led to a constant research for what is strange and remote, and is calculated to excite rather than to impress or instruct, the French instrumentalists as a body display, I think, in characters which those who run may read. It is a life of fever that they lead; it is a constant aspiration after the impossible and far-fetched which torments them: and they choose for them-

selves guides and leaders calculated to stimulate them to effects rather than to encourage them in principles. Rubini, whose destroyed voice has led to the most meretricious exhibition of pathos, in long-drawn tremblings and sudden alternations of tone, — Bellini, whose broad and sickly melodies could but be rendered expressive by an exaggeration of style, — have leavened their manner of performance more than they are aware; while the vague and picturesque praises of Janin and Sand, and the united theory and practice of M. Berlioz, have conspired to lead them away from the old forms of composition, and to engage their heated fancies upon elegies, hymns, serenades, convent-prayers, witch-scenes, fishermen's songs, and such picturesquely-christened caprices, where the name (*sub rosâ* be it said) is oftentimes the most characteristic feature of the work.

As belonging to this class, though "better than his class" — as an authority and celebrity among other authorities and celebrities — there is an artist who must be mentioned here. Though Hungarian by birth, and Parisian only

by adoption, M. Liszt illustrates in himself the criticism, the pianism, and the romanticism of the new schools. The real diamond among much that is paste — the *real* instrumentalist, and wit, and thinker, among many charlatans — he has influenced the musical mind of Young France more than that particularly independent body the artists of Paris would possibly admit if called upon to acknowledge their kings and rulers: and this not merely by his playing, but by sportings of the pen, and words dropped in passing visits. As he here follows other writers on Music, specimens of whose craft have already been given, we will see which way *his* critical biases tend. It might have been thought that the triumphs of Paganini as an artist, and his characteristics as a man, were a subject as exhausted as the Rose for poets, or the Scott novels for table-talk. Yet, there is something in the following fragments, hastily thrown off by him in *La Gazette Musicale*, of deeper import than I have found in any other *éloge*, or technical enumeration of the wonders wrought by the Violin-King.

Paganini.

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEATH.

"Paganini is dead. With him is extinct one of those powerful existences which Nature seems to make haste to recall to herself. With him has disappeared a phenomenon unique in the sphere of Art. * * * * When he came forth in his fortieth year from his retreat, with a talent matured to all the perfection of which it was susceptible, his apparition wore in some degree a supernatural aspect. So vivid was the sensation he produced — to such a point did he strike all imaginations — that to stop at the reality was impossible. We saw all the legends of sorcery and magic of the Middle Ages revived on his behalf; the marvels of his talent were extended to the events of his life: — it was attempted to explain his inexplicable genius by facts still more inexplicable. The world did all but believe that he had sold his soul to a demon; or, at least, that having strangled his wife, he had made of one of her sinews that fourth string, upon which he played his most

enchanting melodies. He traversed Europe, drawing round him an enthusiastic throng, who cast gold at his feet, and gave his name as the most precious recompence to those artists who distinguished themselves on other instruments. Since then, we have seen Paganinis of the piano, of the violoncello, of the guitar. The violinists agonised themselves to discover his secrets; they studied with the sweat of their brows the difficulties which he had created in sport; and the public, taking pity on their efforts, did not even honour them by proclaiming their inferiority. Thus — a rare fortune — the pride of Paganini, if pride he had, breathed on inaccessible heights. He was not troubled by any injustice, he was not disquieted by any indifference: he descended to his tomb without having met a passing shade of the importunate heir to his glory.

"Could we have believed it, had we not witnessed it? This artist, borne in triumph, exalted above humanity; — this talent, to which the people gave so liberally that which it often refuses to the greatest of mankind — riches and fame; — this man, who excited such tran-

sports, passed through the crowd without mingling with it. No one knew the emotions with which his heart beat; he had with no one of his kind a community of thought or sentiment; he appeared a stranger to every sympathy — a stranger to every passion — a stranger even to his own genius: for Genius is the power of revealing God to the human soul; and Paganini had no other divinity save a gloomy and ill-humoured personality.

"It is with regret that I utter severe words like these. I know, too, that he is as unwelcome who blames the dead, as he who praises the living; and that, under pretence of a respect for the tomb, the lie of the apotheosis ought, in the judgment pronounced on any individual, to follow the lie of defamation. I know, also, that some deeds of beneficence could be cited which would seem to disprove this accusation. But what are scattered actions to the whole tissue of a life? It is no more possible for a man to be consequent in evil, than it is given him to be consistent in what is good. And I ask — taking the word *egoism*

not in its limited meaning, but in a sense more extended, and applying it to the artist yet more than to the man — have we not cause to say that the starting-point as well as the goal of Paganini was one and the same narrow egotism?

"However this might be, peace to his memory! He was great, and greatness carries with it its absolution. We know not at what price greatness is given to men. But will the void he left behind him be soon filled up? — Are the essential and accidental causes of his sovereignty of a nature to be reproduced? — Will the artistic royalty which he conquered pass into other hands? — Can there be another Artist-King?

"I do not hesitate to declare that an apparition similar to that of Paganini runs small chance of being again seen. The singular combination of a colossal talent with every circumstance most calculated to surround it with *prestige* will remain an insulated fact in the history of Art. Another, who to-day would attempt to enthral men's minds by voluntarily enveloping his life, like Paganini, in mystery, — tracing

round himself a circle of adamant,— would surprise no one. Supposing him to be possessed of talent beyond all price, the remembrance of Paganini would be always there, to accuse him of charlatanism and plagiary. The public, too, expects something else of the artist it would adopt; and it is only by a path diametrically opposite that he can attain an equal glory — a superior power.

"To regard his art, not as a prompt means of conduct towards selfish enjoyments and a sterile celebrity, but as a sympathetic power, which brings together and unites men; to elevate his life to the high dignity of which talent is the ideal; to make artists comprehend what they could and what they ought to be; to rule opinion by the ascendancy of a noble life; to awaken and maintain in the soul *that enthusiasm for the Beautiful which is so near a passion for the Good;* — such is the task which any artist should impose upon himself who is strong enough to aspire to the heritage of Paganini.

"This task is difficult, but not impossible. Wide are the paths opened to-day to every am-

bition: sympathy and comprehension certainly await every man who makes his art serve a conviction or a sentiment. Every one is at work to bring on new destinies for society. Without exaggerating the importance of the artist in the work of social transformation — without proclaiming in pompous terms (as has perhaps been too much done) his mission and his apostleship—let us believe that his place, too, is marked in the edicts of Providence, and that he too has a share to contribute to a work durable, because sound. Let the artist, then, henceforward renounce, with all his heart, that selfish and vain character of which Paganini was, we believe, a last illustrious example; — let him propose an aim for his exertions, not in himself, but beyond himself; —let his powers and acquirements be a means, not an end; —let him, above all, remember that, like Nobility, — nay, yet more than Nobility, — GENIUS BESTOWS."

How far M. Liszt has suited his life to his theory, his friends and brother musicians know

full well. His unsparing prodigality of his talent in private society is little less remarkable than the munificence with which he has applied the fruits of its public exhibitions to do honour to departed genius (as in the case of his superb completion of the Beethoven monument), or to serve the purposes of charity.

It is the elevation of mind and the shrewdness of perception evidenced, however slightly, in the above fragment, which have made M. Liszt, as an artist, what he is, — in spite of the drawbacks which the childhood of a prodigy and a youth of strange and ceaseless adventure would seem calculated to throw in the way of his attaining the brilliant excellence he has attained. He, indeed, must be gifted with no common measure of loftiness and nerve of spirit who can come out from the destructive hot-bed of precocious success a man — who can pass through the brilliant and disorderly and exciting life of Young Paris without becoming either utterly *blasé* or brutified, or forced into a mould of conventional picturesqueness as unmeaning and as wearisome as the masquerade of beard and

moustache which are to be met alike in the guard-room and the ribbon-shop. But while, musically, M. Liszt has been looked up to, more than they are aware, as a model and a monarch, by the young artists of France, his Parisian sojourn has left its traces upon him. He is too good and profound a musician not to have been of unspeakable use to his contemporaries by revealing to them — though by a light, as it were, which *scorches* — the treasury of rich thoughts and noble conceptions of the great masters of Music. But he has not lived with some of the most brilliant talkers and daring thinkers of his day, in whom brilliancy sometimes overpasses the bounds of scruple, and Thought sometimes escapes loose of all Reason, — not been conversant with the Byron worshippers and the Hoffmann students, with the Pantheistic religionists and the new society-mongers of the French metropolis, — without a vein of natural singularity being encouraged and cherished, so as sometimes to take the forms of contradiction and defiance, which, had his nonage been spent in a calmer hemisphere, might have gradually re-

ceded from sight, or been so trained as to take the direction of the Beautiful in place of the *bizarre*.

It is impossible (familiarly to speak) to take hold of the Public by its button, in the first moment of its pleasure or displeasure, and there and then to trace out the progress of a life and the series of early associations, so as to engage its patience in judging of something utterly strange and rare. But M. Liszt, as an artist, is too unique a phenomenon not to deserve a far more deliberate study than, in England, we have been willing to give his excellences and peculiarities. For not only must the most limited among the purists confess his prodigious mastery over his instrument* — a thing totally

* Let me attempt to enumerate a few of the mechanical peculiarities of M. Liszt's playing. In uniform richness and sweetness of tone he may have been surpassed. His manner of treating the piano—his total indifference to its wood and wire, in his search for effect — could hardly fail to preclude that uniform care and finish, and resolution to please by every touch, which has charmed the world so deservedly in certain contemporary pianists. There is something, too, as regards physical confirmation of hand, which may have been more genially bestowed on others than M. Liszt. But his varieties of tone are re-

distinct from that creative genius which produces melody as the birds do their trills, or the

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markable ; and, as far as I have gone, unexampled. Sometimes, as, for instance, in Schubert's Serenade, or Chopin's Mazurkas, or Moscheles' study in G., Number 3., Book I., he makes the strings whisper with an aërial delicacy, or utter voices clear and tiny as the very finest harp notes. Sometimes, as in the trio to his "Marche Hongroise," the thing (to quote Wordsworth) "becomes a trumpet ; " and a sound is extorted from the unwilling strings—for Rumour declares that piano-fortes find themselves heavily punished by such a novel method of intercourse — as piercing and nasal as the tone of a clarion. He makes use, too, of a double-bass stop which is his own entirely ; and gives that effect of the softened and all-confounding roll of the drum which composers know to be so mysterious and profitable in incantation scenes. The last of these *changes* — as the old harpsichord writers used to call *variations* — is the strangest, but also the least agreeable.

With regard to the amount of difficulties vanquished, those who have least comprehended M. Liszt's mind have perhaps been the most wonder-stricken by his attributes. Rapidity and evenness of finger, consistent with the most self-controlling power of stopping or retarding a passage to introduce some freak of ornament, to improvise some *shade* of expression — grasp over intervals the most harassing and distant (the bass-chords of many of his arrangements extending over two octaves, and yet struck so certainly as almost to lose the effect of the *arpeggio* necessary to

brooks their sweet laughter ; — M. Liszt's manner is not to be thoroughly understood, for better for worse, save by those who are familiar with the newer schools of European imagination. These must be willing to regard him, not merely as the technical successor of Clementi, and Hummel, and Moscheles, but as one in whom the piano, so far from being the end, is but the means of expressing certain emotions. The school in which M. Liszt has been trained — the literary and artistic associ-

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their production) ;—the power of interweaving the richest and most fantastic accompaniments with a steadily moving yet expressive melody (let me instance a *trill* passage in the " Lucia " fantasia),— the maintenance of question and answer among the several parts into which the pianists now love to divide their passages as well as their *cantilenas :* — add to these a rare variety ; a control over all the *intention*, the coquetry, or the pathos, that a mind quick as lightning in its motions can throw into the least suggestive chains of notes ; — add to these velocity, fire, and poignancy in flights of octaves and in chromatic successions of chords : — All these gifts, singly or in combination, are sternly or gamesomely under command of the moment's whim — or, to call it by its right name, the moment's poetical imagining.

ations which he has embraced so eagerly — encourage violent contrasts. Passion, according to its canons, must be allowed free way, a momentary distortion being better than a chilling restraint. Beauty must be exhibited, not in a perpetual flow of harmony,—not the Venus bejewelled and crowned and attended by her Graces, moving only to take new forms of "pomp and pleasure," but foiled by rude and menacing shapes: — with a brawny and tempestuous Mars, as it were, at her side; nay, or even a fearful and misshapen dwarf, allowed to turn his face towards us, that the shudder with which we regard it may send us back to hers with a more exquisite relish. Thus it is with Victor Hugo in his dramas, and with the Dorvals and Lemaitres of the newer French stage in their personations: thus it is with George Sand in her novels. The hoop and the *perruque* vanished long since; after them the philosophers, who sneered at every truth save those wrapt up in remote classic fable; and French Art is revelling in her disenthralment with a boundless audacity which sanctions all experiments and justifies all

outbreaks, — instinct the while with such renewed life and youth and purpose as promise for the Future glorious if not perennial legacies.

But though M. Liszt has been led in some sort to join himself to the class of which we are speaking, by training, by constitution, — and by the applause of those who injudiciously regard extravagances in Art as the true metal, not the *scoria* cast up by it in the haste of its eruption, — it must still be insisted that the amount of his exuberances has been foolishly magnified. The people of England *will* have wonders. When they were tired of believing that Paganini could play upon one string, some of them were willing to believe him capable of playing without strings *at all!* (this is no supposition, but a reality.) Many who have heard M. Liszt only once have been misled through the eye by the singularity of his appearance; and, prepared for what is unusual, on the strength of some sudden outbreak of Fantasy, have set him down at once and for ever as crazed. Because he brings a superabundance of fire and passion to the reading of works fiery and passionate, as

the first movement of Weber's Concert Stück, or Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata, — illustrating their beauties (as Kean did Shakspeare's) with only too much force and vivacity, — they have forgotten the delicious calmness the artist could throw over music of a more tranquil character. Let me instance his playing of the *andante* of the same Sonata; or of Schubert's "Serenade," where Repose takes the colour of human emotion, lulled by the delicious influences of skies, and stars, and night-dews; or, again, of Schubert's "Ave Maria," where every note speaks the resignation of Prayer! If, in the strength of the light thrown upon familiar objects by a genius strong, original, and enthusiastic, some detached fragments *glare* so as to annoy the sense;—is it nothing, on the other hand, to have dark places illuminated, and details brought to day, the form and significance of which have heretofore been lost in the shadow? One more characteristic of M. Liszt, which connects him with other domains of Art than his own, remains to be spoken of: his strong feeling for all music that is peculiar by its nationality,—for the joyous

whirl of the Tarantella, or the floating grace of the Waltz, or the stately parade of the Polonaise, or the quaint measure of the Mazurka. If a week of his playing would give us a leaf out of every composer's book, from Handel down to Herz, from Cramer to Chopin, from Mondonville to Moscheles, it would also give us many leaves from his own journals; and tell us how he listened to the Swiss hill-echoes,—or dreamed away an evening among the lagoons at Venice,—or stood at the inn-door, and looked through its rude arch of blackened timber, while the *volksfest* of the Tyroler or Styrian was going on merrily within,—or assisted at a stately pageant given in his own capital of Pesth; possibly to honour some native artist, welcomed home with orations and plaudits which to us *sensible* English seem like things in faëry tales! M. Liszt's chief strength in composition has hitherto shown itself in the exquisite and appropriate settings he has given to the scraps of wild music he has gathered in such a pilgrimage as this.

To these sketches of some of the most remarkable personages of their time, who severally illustrate the present condition of Art and Opinion in France and its dependencies, a prophecy, by way of appendix, may be looked for in answer to the natural question, "What next?" Will George Sand succeed in the promulgation of her own strange idol-worship? Will M. Berlioz ever beguile or criticise musical Europe into believing in melody without rhythm, harmony without sequence, and composition without design? Will M. Liszt found a college of poetical pianism, in which its professors shall each — not only personate, but *be* — a Napoleon, a Hamlet, a Sardanapalus, a Faust, at the piano, — still not forgetting the great Fathers of the art, who dreamed of no such developments, but without whose precepts and sound knowledge, as basis, such personifications would become mere ravings?

I dare make no direct answer to these questions, never having had recourse to Mademoiselle Lenormand, who was alive two years ago, No. ——, Rue Tournon, and still was consulted

by many gentlemen and ladies of condition as to political and private events. Possibly some notion concerning the future destinies of Manners and Music in France may disclose itself, by implication, in other passages from my journals.

CHAP. IV.

THE CONSERVATOIRE.

The touchy point of the Parisian *Dilettanti*. — Anticipations of the Conservatoire. — News touching Handel, *Sir* Smart, and the Duke of ——, heard there. — Shabbiness of the Concert-room. — Dates of the Progress of the Conservatoire.— French Deficiency in Instrumental Composition.—M. Habeneck's Direction.— The Music I heard. — The Orchestra and that of our Philharmonic Concerts compared. — French Readings of Beethoven. — French Rage for Beethoven. — M. Batta's *Matinées*.—The Audience of the Conservatoire. — French Appreciation of Beethoven illustrated. — An Anecdote told to the wrong Person. — The Vocal Music of the Conservatoire. — Gluck, Rameau. — Conclusion.

THE Parisian *dilettanti*, as far as I have been able to observe, though ever ready for controversy, have only one very touchy point. If you cannot relish Mademoiselle Rachel, it is ascribed to a *sentiment* for Mademoiselle Mars; and a loophole is made for your escape from indignation, by the sympathy which the French have always been willing to extend to passions

for old women. If you do not like Duprez, you are excused on the plea of supposed regrets for Nourrit. You may balance between Liszt and Thalberg, and still be regarded as a person who has a right to an opinion. You may extol the delicate and dreamy Chopin as superior to either; and it will rather serve you than otherwise, as earning for you the covetable reputation of one whose taste leads him to the gem rather than to the bas-relief — to what is choicest, and only appreciable by the few, in Art. You may even prefer Kalkbrenner, and a civil shrug of the shoulders is all the visitation your peculiar taste will encounter. As to the Italian singers, they are matters of fair dispute; and so long as you do not assert that Rubini is *quite* inaudible, you will be let alone, — or, at the severest, be let down by being quietly assured that "they never sing fit to be heard in London." But you had as wisely deny that France is France, — its cooks the only cooks — its gloves the only gloves — its women the only women worth a second word — in the world; as that the Conservatoire is a paradise of such

perfection, that even to praise it implies an effrontery and a want of due submission on your part. An inhabitant may comprehend it; a stranger must be dazzled and enchanted into a reverential silence!

In all these cases, an unbelieving spirit is as unadvisable as that blind credulity which hoodwinks judgment, and substitutes traditional for real enthusiasm. Unhappy is the time when the mind ceases to be open to new impressions, and the pride of self-conceit takes the place of a genial wish to admire! I had, for years, been hoarding up authorities and reports regarding the Conservatoire, with the confidence of one who has undergone singularly little disappointment on meeting with the master-works of Art, long expected and frequently described. And, accordingly, on my way to the Carnival in Paris, in January, 1840, the hope of assisting at one of those far-famed entertainments was uppermost, as a reward and a temptation to sustain me during the wretched hours between Gravesend and Boulogne, and the yet more wearying land-journey betwixt the Hôtel des Bains and

the Barrière de St. Denis, with the muddiest roads, the worst cattle, and — no offence to MM. Lafitte, Caillard, and Co. — the laziest diligence in all France. It was my first wish; and I think I do not even look forward to the first glimpse of Venice, or the first chord of the "Miserere" in the Sistine Chapel, with a greater eagerness than I did to the hour which should make me partaker in a pleasure described to me by Frenchmen — nay, and by Germans, who love not the French — as unique.

How my wishes were seconded by kind and friendly assistance, is only an affair of my own gratitude; and let it be here expressed sincerely. How I sate hemmed in betwixt two critical fires — betwixt, as it were, Iconoclasm and Tradition personified — the reader has already been told; also concerning the multitude of beards round about me; and what one of their owners said touching M. Veron's decorations, and the success of "La Juive." I would not be thought an eaves-dropper; but I cannot help mentioning that, on my second experiment in compressing myself within the

least practicable space at the Conservatoire, I heard some facts regarding English music, too wonderful to escape being journalised. Among others, that Handel's choruses form part of our weekly church service! The same authority, by the way, described our Antient and Philharmonic Concerts with a bewilderment so delicious as to confound entirely the functions of "*Sir* Smart" and that cheerful and benevolent personage, H. R. H. —— who, while patronising Music, listens, as —— phrases it, "at the top of his lungs." But there is no need to travel to the Rue Bergère to learn the limits of human invention, for any one who has been present (as I have been) when the paternity of an anonymous poem was admitted by a party to whom it was flatteringly ascribed,— the real owner sitting by the while.

The room where the Conservatoire holds its concerts is the *ne plus ultra* of shabbiness for a metropolis, our own dreary Opera concert-room not forgotten. Artificially lighted by day-time, small and filthy, airless and uncomfortable, I have heard it gravely said that its

discomfort and its limited size tend to keep up the concerts. Were the *salle* larger, every one could subscribe who wished; until, some fine day, perhaps, the room might be found too ample: on the converse of Sir Walter Scott's theory, that whatever is common is precious. There is a conscious martyrdom, moreover, to all Womenkind, in an arena so thoroughly destructive of their graces and toilettes, that may tend to support them in their devotion to the severe schools of Music. These considerations are not mine. As far as I am able to judge, a sound and classical taste exists among French ladies, requiring no such explanation as this to be given for their constant presence in the *Salle Bergère.* They belong to the critics' box, and were part of an answer made by one of the fraternity to another, who was apologising for the dreary and barn-like aspect of the concert room — *at* the strange Englishman.

Had good taste or good policy permitted me to discuss French institutions as freely as English ones were discussed for my benefit, I might, in reply, have shown how the Conserva-

toire was distinguished from our model instrumental concert — the Philharmonic Society — as much by official patronage as by its superior system of organisation, which admits of no nightly change of conductors. Faint and far-off were the beginnings of the institution; and not auspicious as far as instrumental proficiency is concerned. For though Le Grand Monarque, besides dancing in the grand ballets which prefigured the present splendours of L'Académie Royale, promised, as it were, his people their Conservatoire, by himself being a guitarist and the royal proprietor of a band of four and twenty violins, with Lulli at their head, he left but a school of tyros to his successors. "When the sonatas of Corelli," says Corette, in the preface to his 'Method of Accompaniment,' "arrived from Rome towards the year 1715"— that is, at a period when Germany and England had already their men of renown — "no one could execute them. The Duke of Orleans, then Regent, and a great amateur of music, being desirous to hear them, was obliged to cause them to be sung by three voices. The violinists

began to study them, and, at the end of three years' time, three were found who were able to play them. One of these, Baptiste, absolutely went to Rome to study them under Corelli."

Yet, though Royalty thus did its part in fostering a school of violinism, it was under revolutionary auspices that the instrumentalists of Paris were united into the national plalanx which now chooses to challenge Europe. At first the Conservatoire was a mere school. "Forty-five musicians," says M. Lafage in his Manuel, "formed, in 1789, the nucleus of the music of *La Garde Nationale* of Paris. This was increased in 1790 to the number of seventy-eight, the municipal body contributing to its maintenance, and requiring its services on the occasion of all national fêtes and celebrations. In 1792 the National Guard was suppressed; and the Municipality had no more money to bestow on its musicians: but M. Sarrette, — who had always exerted himself in their behalf, seeing in the destruction of the cathedral choral schools the probable extinction of all means of musical instruction, — solicited, in the name

of the artists of Paris, from the Municipality of Paris, the establishment of a national school of Music." This was granted: and but for this, says the same authority, many distinguished artists would have quitted their country. The charter, however, was not definitively drawn out, nor the name fixed upon till the year 1795. By this charter, provision was to be made for the instruction of six hundred pupils, chosen from all the departments. In 1802, however, the expenses were found intolerably high: the Conservatoire was reduced — and the cathedral schools, by way of compensation, re-established. A new charter, passed in 1808, associated dramatic with musical study — founding a school of declamation, as well as of vocal and instrumental instruction. To this end, a minute and comprehensive *règlement* was drawn out. In 1814, however, it was again found necessary to remodel the establishment, which, after languishing during the Hundred Days, was suppressed on the restoration of the Bourbons. But the fruits of this suppression were disastrous, — there were no choristers nor orchestral players

for the theatres forthcoming when wanted; and the end was, that in 1822 M. Cherubini was commissioned to direct a new establishment. This for a while was more eminently vocal than instrumental. It was not till the successes of M. Choron, as director of a school of singers, piqued the instrumentalists into activity, that the old *exercises* of the classes of the pupils were replaced by those admirable and brilliant meetings in which the orchestral players have ended not by turning so much as absolutely overthrowing the tables on the choralists, — constituting themselves the main attraction, and rendering the vocal portion of the concert entirely subordinate.

In thus dating the progress of the Conservatoire to its present perfection as an executive body, it is not to be overlooked, that, with all their zeal, there have never been any signs among the French of the foundation of a school of national orchestral composition. This, indeed, if the reasonings of the foregoing chapters be true, may be said to demand — if not such settled times as France has hardly known for

the last half century — such settled minds as the nature of French society was not calculated to encourage. The same physical aptitude which makes dancing so eminently delightful to every thing with Gallic blood in its veins, and which gives a neatness of shape and a lightness of structure to so many a work, totally beyond the reach of the heavy-handed English manufacturer, — was sure to tend to the production of good instrumentalists. But it by no means assured the possession of that poetical enthusiasm, balanced by sound and ancient science — that sufficiency of fantasy and sufficiency of judgment united — necessary to combine ingredients of melody and harmony, for the production of such masterpieces as Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven have left. And accordingly we have seen, that, in trying to found a school of their own, they are with all their might striving to dispense with attributes so sparingly possessed, and endeavouring — in place of the antique Couperins *, &c., who

* M. Fétis enumerates ten members of this family, ranging between the years 1630 and 1815, who were all

employed science without fancy — to make Fancy dispense with Science! Thus, then, as the French have few symphonies and overtures which can possibly claim admission into their model concert, the Conservatoire is thrown upon the stores of German classical music. During my visit to Paris, I heard executed there the Symphony of Beethoven in B flat, and the more fanciful one in A major; his overture to Leonora," and the thoughtful and picturesque overture which Moscheles has written to "Joan of Arc."

The orchestra, be it remembered, is always under one and the same direction. M. Habeneck has not, like our Philharmonic conductors, to give up his baton (I beg pardon, his violin bow), after his concert is over, to M.

distinguished musicians — most of them organists. They seem to have received by heritage the organ of St. Gervais. It is to the compositions of Couperin *le Grand* (born in 1668, and who died in 1733), and his school of pupils, that I refer, in venturing to take them as a type of old French instrumental music. I know few of them; but the dryness of these is so eminent as, I think, to warrant the above judgment.

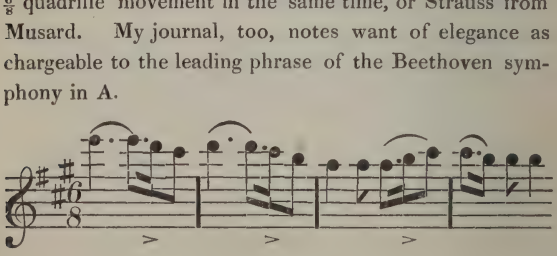
somebody else, who, for illustration's sake, may be as spirited as he is phlegmatic, or as phlegmatic as he is spirited. The ordering of the band is his alone, and you may see the phalanx of bows plying up and down on the strings with a mechanical consent and parallelism which in England can only be observed in those *fantoccini* orchestras that, under a monkey or a pair of white mice, borne by some black-eyed lank-haired Savoyard, loiter along those quiet streets where unfortunate literary men live. Nor is this a solitary and disproportionate excellence. The group of wind-instruments, too, at the Conservatoire has a like unity and coherence, — a like family resemblance among its separate members, — a like sensitive delicacy which is beyond all praise. No unfortunate flute there chirps half a note before its time, — no plethoric bassoon drops one of its thick Satyr-like tones in the midst of a pause, — no horn totters on the edge of coarse and mail-coach falseness when the tug of difficulty comes! All this results from training, since our own Philharmonic wind-instrumentalists could hardly severally have been more distinguished than

they *were*. Yet who ever heard eight of their meetings go over, and was not vexed by some such gratuitous exhibition, — some such flaw in the perfect symmetry of the whole? The orchestra in the Rue Bergère, I felt, *must* complete its labours perfectly. It is as unerring a machine as if there were a knout and Siberia outside the concert room, to punish all defaulters, — the system of discipline, it has been said, which was pursued with the redoubtable horn band of Prince Potemkin the magnificent!

What, then, — asks the enthusiast, impatient of distinctions and qualifications, and foreseeing what is to come, — can be wanting to the orchestra of the Conservatoire? I was very nearly challenged in Paris for hinting that, with all the *nuance* imparted to the band by M. Habeneck's admirable training, there was still missing that healthy and satisfying expressiveness which those who have heard German music well rendered by Germans will ever after demand in its execution. The moving principle of French music appears to me rhythmical time; — an exquisite finish and exact-

ness in laying note to note; a certain vivacity of temperament, which even communicates its colour to the slowest music, and drives the quickest towards the *mouvement de galoppe*—the utmost indulgence of the propensity. Whether or not—to dissect with extreme nicety—such a disposition tends towards a superabundance, or at least a misappropriation, of accent, I leave to the "darkly learned:" it tends, however, I cannot but think, to the discouragement of that solidity without slackness which is indispensable to the execution of the grandest music. And, slight though the difference was felt to be *,

* I cannot but note, a little more exactly, one or two of what I thought the short-comings of the *Conservatoire* edition of Beethoven. First, in all the triple rhythms, a want of sensibility—a want of that undulating flow which (familiarly to illustrate) distinguishes a *valse* from a $\frac{6}{8}$ quadrille movement in the same time, or Strauss from Musard. My journal, too, notes want of elegance as chargeable to the leading phrase of the Beethoven symphony in A.



in spite of every thing that fineness of touch can do,—of a dazzling brilliancy in the stringed

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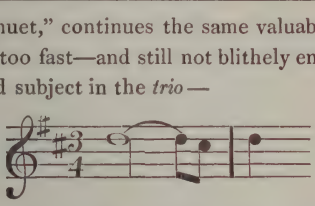
"The minuet," continues the same valuable authority, "was taken too fast—and still not blithely enough; while the splendid subject in the *trio*—



lost all its dignity from the acceleration of time; and the second part of the same movement, all its voluptuous richness from being performed almost entirely without *nuance*. Perhaps I am hard to please in this, from the circumstance of my always associating those notes—I know not why—with the passage of the Egyptian queen down the Cydnus, described in my favourite 'Antony and Cleopatra' of Shakspeare:

"'The barge she sat in was of burnish'd gold,' &c."

Again, the second subject of Moscheles' overture—

was given drily and without flow. The performance of this latter work was, throughout, chargeable with a total absence of that *laisser aller*, without which no composition of the picturesque school can produce the slightest effect.

In the *allegro* of the "Leonora" overture, and in the *allegro* of Beethoven's Symphony in B flat, there seemed

instruments,— of a promptitude and gentleness in the wind instruments, we conceive not here,— I remained cold. My judgment was convinced by the perfection of cleverness, but my heart was not touched by that right feeling and thorough meaning which is indispensable in the rendering of the music of thought as distinguished from the music of mechanism. Somehow or other, what I heard seemed as far from the real deep-felt delivery of Beethoven, as the occasional "*Superbe!*" and "*Magnifique!*" of the audience, discharged in proper places, is from the real praise which that music demands. They try to come out of themselves in Paris; they do

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a general flippancy of delivery to my ear, which I found *had* existed (as least as far as I comprehend the term) when I afterwards heard the same movements by the Leipsic orchestra. In the *trio* of the minuet of the same Symphony, — a portion requiring the utmost delicacy and readiness on the part of the violins, which ought to sprinkle the melody, as it were, with quick bird-like notes, — the Conservatoire orchestra was beyond all praise. I have, perhaps, extracted enough to illustrate the nature of my exceptions ; — which, be it added, would be ridiculous if taken against any body of players short of the most consummate mechanical perfection.

their best to approach those mighty works, but the achievement is above them and beyond them.*

* There is nevertheless a rage for Beethoven in Paris, as there have been rages for Scott, Byron, and Goethe, to which we can show nothing analogous. And his works have some excellent and earnest interpreters, who plunge, though feverishly rather than steadily, deep into his mysteries. I have not forgot the pretty little suite of apartments, *au quatrième*, No. 42. Rue Lafitte, where I heard the posthumous quartetts of Beethoven disentangled by a party led by M. Seghers, and to which M. Alexandre Batta is violoncellist, with a conscientiousness and depth of feeling that brought me far nearer an understanding of that difficult music than I had ever come before. The *matinées* at which these works were played were charming. The audience was at once miscellaneous and select: the breathless interest there being silence of a quality different from the forced attention of the Conservatoire audience. M. Batta, however, (whose remarkable power in this highest order of music has been never properly exhibited to the English public,) is not Parisian by birth, but Belgian; and there is a fineness of musical organisation in his country, so rich and copious in its fruits as to claim separate attention. The nature of its confection is, perhaps, hinted at by Victor Hugo, in his fanciful lines "written on the pane of a Flemish window" (Les Rayons et les Ombres), where he apostrophises —

"Noble Flandre, où le Nord se rechauffe engourdi
Au soleil de Castille et s'accouple au Midi."

It is difficult, from the temper and demeanour of a strange audience, to gather its amount of intelligence. The whole business of Italian society is transacted in the boxes of La Scala; but who dare assume that the Italians are indifferent to their own music? The Edinburghers, who sat through a whole act of Mrs. Siddons's most impassioned acting with a solitary "That 's no bad!" by way of plaudit and encouragement to the half-paralysed artist, were paying her their highest honours; and in Paris, when the applause rose the loudest at M. Walewski's comedy (which had nearly led to the duel), the owners of the very noisiest hands cried "O! O!—how bad it is!" But that the audience of the Conservatoire were at heart cold, I must believe, unless I am to mistrust the existence of that electric sympathy which hardly requires spoken words or interchanged looks. That this may be communicated in large assemblages of people, no one knows how, we had a proof last Autumn, at our Birmingham Festival, when the whole audience simultaneously rose to do honour to the devo-

tional elevation of the Corale in Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang." I felt — perhaps this is mere wire-drawing — that the audience of the Rue Bergère would have done the most thorough justice to its sensations in a well-turned *mot* or a vague rhapsody: that it possessed no deeper fountain of praise to draw from than such as would have been resorted to had the theme been a new *ballet* or a new melodrame.

All this I said to my journal at the moment when my impressions were fresh. What possessed me to broach such an unpalatable heresy in a French *salon* I cannot precisely recollect: possibly extravagant self-praise irritated my self-conceit to the controversial point. Let no *fanatico* ever trust himself to speak out on such occasions, lest he talk temper instead of sense! or lest there befall him what befell me. "*We* not understand Beethoven!" was the response in full chorus. "Beethoven is only understood in Paris:" and the old story of the neglect shown by the Viennese to their great composer was thrown in my teeth, with a *quantum suff.* of insinuations that "for an Englishman to talk

about music at all, without a national opera as we were, &c. &c.,—yet more, to presume to criticise the Conservatoire, — was something really *too* pleasant!"

"Well," I said, at last, breaking out a little impatiently as my antagonists became more and more supercilious, "you can hardly charge upon England such an instance of false enthusiasm as was shown here on the occasion of one of Liszt's concerts."

"*O, par exemple!*"

"I mean," continued I, "when he chose to reverse his *programme*, and play a trio by Pixis in the place of one of Beethoven; and the Pixis trio was applauded to the skies for the grandeur of its ideas, as so superb, so mystical!—while the Beethoven trio was hardly listened to, and pronounced stale, mechanical, and commonplace. Am I not correct in my anecdote?"

There was a dead silence. By one of those ill-natured freaks of Fortune which deserve to befall all those who mean to be severe in argument, my very antagonist, whom I had intended to demolish by my tale, was precisely one of the

cognoscenti who had been foremost in the blunder, — and noisiest in crying-up the inferior music as Beethoven's!

The vocal portion at the Conservatoire concerts I attended was so ill executed, as to make even the Temple scene from Gluck's "Alceste," not ill declaimed by Mademoiselle Capdeville, a blemish rather than an attraction. But the well-known March! — there the Parisians had the true tradition; and its execution by the most exquisite orchestra I have ever heard was of itself worth a journey to Paris. All that could be wished of flowing dignity, — of broad, but not square simplicity, — of rich solemnity, — was there: and those few bars of melody raised in my mind the emotions I had vainly sought at Berlin in the presentment of the same master's "Iphigenie." A rough but sprightly chorus, from "Les Indes Galantes" of Rameau, was also a thorough treat. I heard, too, a violin adagio of Bach's, most deliciously finished by M. Habeneck, but not felt in the true Leipsic style; and some other clever *solo* playing, any distinct recollection of which has escaped me. As a whole,

however, these concerts, far-famed though they be, have not that special perfection in the catalogue of my musical experiences which the best performances at L'Académie Royale possess. In honestly recording this judgment, I have to entreat the reader to believe that I endeavoured, throughout my acquaintance with them, to subdue rather than to encourage a cavilling and dissatisfied spirit. After all, perhaps, the best commentary upon them was that with which M. —— discreetly closed the argument I illustrated with the *mal-à-propos* anecdote I have recorded: — "O! if you only mean merely to say that the French are not the Germans, I give up."

MUSIC AND MANNERS

IN

GERMANY.

THE LEIPSIC FAIR.

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CHAP. I.

THE CONCERTS.

The Leipsic Fair a Tonic.—The Road from Berlin.—The Road from Frankfort.—Picturesque Towns.—Half an Hour at Weimar.—A Sonnet in the Frauen Platz.—M. Chelard.—Centralisation in Music.—A Word about Hummel and the Court of Weimar.—Aspect of Leipsic.—Its Advantages as a Residence for an Artist.—Arrival.—My Lodgings.—A Walk through the Fair.—Costumes.—Jews and Tyrolese.—A Modern Autolycus.—Unexpected Rencontres.—The Theatre of Leipsic.—Dr. Burney and Herr Hiller.—Mademoiselle Schlegel.—More French Operas.—"Les Huguenots."—Herr David's Leadership (and a Note touching Chamber-Music).—Dr. Mendelssohn Bartholdy.—The Subscription Concerts.—The *Programmes*.—The Directors.—Herr Rochlitz.—Herr Hartel.—Great Variety of Research; and its admirable Effects.—The Perform-

ance of Beethoven's Symphonies. — The Gewand-haus. —Crowded Audiences. — The Orchestra.— The Singers.—The Suppers after the Concert.

WHETHER as regards health, spirits, or musical taste (the latter palled by inanimate repetitions of inferior works, or disappointed by imperfect versions of master compositions), I can imagine no tonic better than the Leipsic Autumn Fair, as I took it in 1839 and 1840.

From Berlin to Leipsic, the journey of a night and half a day is singularly insipid, save for Wittemberg: from Frankfort, the road, two nights and a day and a half in length, to measure distance by schnellpost time, is more engaging. First comes the fruit district, which is rich and joyous by reason of its plenty. To this succeeds the country in the Kinsig Thal, which, though not particularly beautiful, has a pastoral character of its own. When the Red Land and the Thuringian Wood are entered, there is some fine forest scenery; and about Eisenach the road winds among a succession of hills, clothed with trees, which make a brilliant panorama, when they are seen in their autumnal

dress. The towns, too, along this road are most of them worth a day's halt: Fulda, for its ecclesiastical remains; Eisenach, for its clean, picturesque market-place, and its vicinity to the Wartburg — Luther's Patmos, where the stains of ink with which he assaulted The Devil still blot the wall; Gotha, for its University and Palace; Weimar, for the sake of the brilliant court of intellect and genius which once ruled Germany thence. I have not myself taken a pilgrim's rest at any of these "stations," but at the last I availed myself of an hour's halt on my last journey, to go and stand before the house where Goethe dwelt; and, though it is but like any other house, and the fountain before it like any other fountain, both stand out distinct in my memory, from a circumstance, in itself trifling, associated with them. The Frauen-Platz, a little irregular space, was empty even of loitering children: the noon was warm and sunshiny. In one of the upper windows, from which the poet had looked out, I caught the profile of the colossal helmeted head of the Goddess of Wisdom; in another, half-opened,

behind the muslin curtain, stood an exquisite nosegay of brilliant autumn flowers. One would not have remarked these things elsewhere, but seen in a Goethe's house they were sufficient to set the fancy in motion.

Where mighty ones have been, O ne'er erase
One touch, one print, one memory! Ev'n the weed
That clings around the threshold-posts would speed
The enthusiast's rapture, could he only trace
That e'er the Master, lingering by that place,
Vouchsafed its wan and worthless bloom to heed.
And thus 'twas precious, when I stood to read
The words o'er Goethe's door, to meet the face
Of high Minerva smiling gravely bland;
The Goddess there — her priest and follower gone!
And when I mark'd how some benignant hand
Had gathered flowers, and placed them in the sun,
It pleased my fancy well, that wreath so fair
Should deck the silent shrine whose Angel still is there!

The musician would probably find his account in lingering longer than a day at Weimar, for the sake of the fruits of M. Chelard's *kapellmeister*-ship in the management of its musical theatre. We have not yet, in England, forgotten his capital conduct of the first German Opera company (that of 1832) which revealed

to us the "Fidelio" of Beethoven. What a grievous pity for dramatic music in Germany is it that all these little capitals, each with its carefully mounted theatre, its diligent orchestra, and its clever superintendant, should not be united in a general league of good understanding for the promotion and encouragement of national genius! For popular enjoyment, their present diffused state of force and power and influence may be better than such musical centralisation as makes every French aspirant fix his eyes on Paris as his sole arena; but for the progress and encouragement of the artist, there is much that is eminently dissatisfactory in the fact that his local fame serves him little in the next town; and that, however much his own court applauds his opera, it stands a poor chance of gaining a gracious hearing elsewhere.

Nor can the *fanatico* pass Weimar, and forget Hummel, who was *Kapellmeister* there during the period which makes so brilliant a figure in the annals of Germany. Honest, rough, and kind-hearted; thoroughly belonging to the old

school; in youth scantily educated, and severely coerced; unable, as far as I am aware, to dissect and to analyse the art which his pianoforte-playing so richly adorned, with that acuteness and refinement of research which the accomplished men around him so loved to indulge in; — an inferior musician, who was a more eloquent talker, might probably have made a more notable figure in the Golden Book of Weimar. I confess myself to have been as much pained as surprised (for it is painful to have admiration lessened) on finding, from more than one source, that the general treatment of the German musical artist at Weimar — that highly vaunted centre of enlightenment — bore no proportion to the encouragement extended to the painter, the poet, or even the passing English stranger. I have been told, on authority hard to dispute, that Hummel, when almost a patriarch in his art, on the evenings of his performance at Court, was allowed to remain among the cloaks, pattens, and umbrellas of the guests till the moment for his *exhibition* arrived: this unworthy usage being broken through by the spirit of a younger artist, who, on being treated

in a similar despotic fashion (after receiving a direct and courteous invitation as a private individual), walked quietly out of the *Residenz*, to the great discomfiture of a circle convened for the express purpose of profiting by the talent the conveners knew not how to honour.

But, be the pilgrim ever such a Goethe-worshipper, be he musician or amateur, gentle or simple, humourist or journalist or novelist, or merely the traveller who hires a carriage and a courier as a means of getting rid of much vacant time and loose cash, let no one within a hundred miles of the place miss the Leipsic Fair. The town in itself (or personal liking has prejudiced me) has a quaint, cheerful, and friendly appearance. Within the walls, high richly-decorated houses and old churches seem almost toppling over each other, so thickly are they set. Without, where the ramparts were, is an irregular pleasure-ground, spreading out in some places to such a respectable amplitude as to secure privacy for the walker. Beyond this belt is another ring, made up of houses, some of them set in gardens, richly dressed and full

of flowers; the prettiest, most inviting residences which kind hearts and distinguished musicians could find. The town is rich in both. There I found that cheerful, simple, unselfish, and intelligent artistic life which many have been used to imagine as universally German. Leipsic has no court to stiffen its social circles into formality, or to hinder its presiding spirits from taking free way: on the other hand, it possesses a University to stir its intelligences, a press busy and enterprising, and a recurrence of those gatherings which bring a representative of every class of society in Europe together. These last can hardly pass over — be they for mere money-getting, be they for mere merry-making — without disturbing the settlement of that stagnant and pedantic egotism into which the strongest of minds are apt to sink when the wheel of life moves too slowly, or the circle of cares is too narrow.

To be sure, the first moments of my arrival at Leipsic in 1839 were unpropitious enough. I had come from Berlin without stopping. It was a lowering, showery afternoon; and, finding it impossible to gain any hotel accom-

modation, I was transferred by the most indefatigable of all landlords — him, I mean, of the Hôtel de Bavière — to a lodging, four stories high, close in his neighbourhood. The common staircase which led to my nest was dark and ruinous, and of course an inch thick with dirt, since every room in every story of the house was occupied by its own trader or traders. The floor of my chamber, too, when I reached it, was under water; and an old skinny bare-legged Sycorax was paddling about in slippers, on pretence of making every thing clean, as she paddled about whooping to an old man as miserable-looking as herself, and, moreover, imbued thoroughly with tobacco. There was no remaining to witness the issue of these operations; so, having deposited my baggage high and dry above the reach of the flood, taking it for granted that somehow or other the place would be made habitable before bed-time (*box*-time one ought to call it in Germany), I strolled out to search for a dinner, and to study the humours of the Fair.

I do not remember to have been ever more

thoroughly amused than during that walk. Sympathising, to a childish degree, in Charles Lamb's passion for shop-window prospects and the human countenance, I was arrested at every step by the high buildings, with wares of every conceivable quality streaming out of every window, from garret to cellar: — food for the mind in books, pleasure for the eye in prints, Nuremberg toys and that many-coloured Bohemian glass which makes the booths where it is exhibited glitter like Aladdin's palace; — clothing for the body, in the shape of furs, woollen goods, knitted garments of form and use totally unintelligible to English eyes, and magnificent lengths of glaring calico which "the poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling" may accept, if he be willing, for pageant banners when Day begins to close in. Then the vendors! Here were peasantesses, presiding over their homely wares, in enormous winged caps, with long streamers, or tight forehead-bands of black lace, and every variety of tunic, joseph, petticoat, polonaise, and Hessian boot. There was a man — Heaven knows whence! — from head to

heel of the colour of mud, with a huge hat, like an over-ripe mushroom in shape, not half covering his long unkempt hair,—who stopped and pressed every one to buy his mousetraps, in a deep melancholy voice that at once put to flight all the notions of *brigandage* and blackguardism which a first glance excited. Close behind, a couple of Jews, in their glossy camlet gaberdines and high-furred caps, made excellent painters' figures: one of the pair with a long yellow beard, so glossy and crisp and curling as to form a wonderful feature in a picture, however ill it assorted with the keen small eyes and the hooked physiognomy belonging to "the tribes;" while the chin of his companion, who was pale as a ghost and spectrally thin, was garnished — it might have been for contrast's sake — with a luxury of black hair. The next trader, perhaps, was a grave and stately Oriental, in his flowing robes and white turban, sitting patiently behind his stall of pipe *waaren*, or gliding up — the most courteous of merchants — with essenced amulets and necklaces of black clay, hanging in cataracts over

the edge of his pedlar's box. Among the people I most liked to meet in the Fair, were the Tyrolese. One establishment or brotherhood of four great brawny audacious men stands before me as I write, with their steeple hats pranked out with nosegays, and their round jackets, their leather girdles, and their velveteen breeches, displaying clean white stockings and calves to set up a score of Irish chairmen; — the most impudent, merriest, best-natured disciples of Autolycus that ever went forth to bamboozle or amuse the world of Dorcases and Mopsas. One of them — some six feet high — had a particular propensity to creep into the hotels at high dinner-tide, and to worm himself into the thickest of the crowd, where the prettiest women were to be found; tempting them, like his archetype, to buy "a tawdry lace and a pair of sweet gloves," with impudent flatteries there was no resisting. All the world knows, ever since the days of the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, how relishing even a dustman's compliment may be! And my friend admired the small wrists and the white hands to such good purpose, that brisk

was the trade he drove, and many the pair of rotten gloves and trumpery bracelets he would get rid of, ere discovery of his presence overtook him, and the eager perspiring crowd of *kellners*, enraged at being interrupted in their service, began to abuse him and to order him out. Not a step would he budge, having taken up a good position. More than once, an absolute chase ensued to clear the room, when the varlet, suddenly diving under one of the tables, presented his waggish face and his box at the other side, in some corner so inaccessible, with such a pertinacious determination to make good his ground, that resistance was in vain, and he was permitted to finish his traffic in triumph. I ought to be rather ashamed to own the acquaintance; but, after one of these *escapades*, whether he had seen encouragement and diversion in my face I know not, my friend the Tyroler never after met me in the street without choosing to stride along by my side for a considerable distance, laughing and chattering like a magpie, and offering to carry for me whatever I might happen to have in my hand.

Nor are such groups as these the only ones which make the Leipsic Fair so amusing to all who love to study character. The strangers and guests are as miscellaneous as the traders. He must indeed be a lonely man, or have lived all his life in the most tarry-at-home circle of his county, who can escape from picking up there some old acquaintance or some new friend. The number of known and unexpected faces the pilgrim will meet, swept away by the next wave of arrivals, is not the least of the attractions of the place and the time, which make him feel, ere he has been four and twenty hours in Leipsic, as if he had been familiar with it all his life! One day it will be his lot, perhaps, at table to face a pair of the cold, thoroughly-dressed figures whom he has left doing their part in crowding the London season without animating it; another, his acquaintance, who sixteen years ago came to England to learn its language and mercantile business, will turn up; another, the discoverer, who, when they parted last, was bound for the Andes or the North Pole; another, the artist or

artiste, whom he has at home admired at a distance in concert-room or theatre. If, indeed, he be a musician, he is sure of interesting encounters at the Fair of Leipsic; and no wonder, since in that town, as I knew it, resides the heart of Northern Germany's musical vitality.

The theatre of Leipsic, pleasantly set in a little plantation, is within a small and shabby building. In Burney's time, though its performances were under the direction of M. Hiller, the style of singing was denounced by him as coarse and vulgar, inasmuch as the Italian traditions, which had been introduced early in the century, had been forgotten by the vocalists. A reason somewhat curious, when it is remembered that the aforesaid Hiller was Mara's master; and that she was confessedly at the head of European *cantatrici* as a vocalist! In 1839 it had not much to boast of, save an excessively fresh and pleasing voice in the person of Mademoiselle Schlegel, the comeliest of comely *blondes*, some seventeen years of age, who, though already ample in person, had not as yet lost that youthful deli-

cacy of appearance which generally passes away sadly soon from the stage-heroines of Germany. Leipsic seemed as entirely devoted to French opera as the other towns I visited. While the thin and wearisome "Caramo" of Lortzing put every one to sleep, as it did me, "Les Huguenots" and "Gustave," performed under every disadvantage of *locale*, drew crowded audiences.

I saw the former; and a more curious performance I never witnessed. Owing to the quantity of supernumerary intstruments introduced by Meyerbeer into his score, and the limited scale of the orchestral force, the result at Leipsic was, that the wind-instruments almost outnumbered the violins, to the utter destruction of those proportions upon the observance of which Meyerbeer lays so much stress for the due production of his effects. Nevertheless, the whole work, vast and complicated as it is, went without flaw or faltering; and, harsh as the orchestra was compelled to be (the stringed instruments having no other chance of being heard at all), an outline of the whole work was

traced with a coarse fidelity, if I may so express it, which surprised me; and, by the care and intelligence indicated, gave me pleasure, in spite of my constant and (some call it) prejudiced attachment to the Grand Opera of Paris. It is my conviction that no amount of preparation or practice, in the most operatic days of our English theatres, would have enabled either one or other to give so spirited though sketchy a version of that complex music. And when I encountered —— and ——, by the presumption of so small a body of singers and instrumentalists attempting works so enormous, thrown into fits of disapproval so violent that they would not vouchsafe to witness murder so flagrant; — willing though I was to concede the utter impropriety of the choice of such an opera, I could not but insist that the manner of its performance implied a perfection of leadership I had never fallen in with elsewhere.

And so it does. I have met with no one at the executive head of an orchestra to compare with Herr David. Spirit, delicacy, and consummate intelligence, and that power of com-

municating his own zeal to all going along with him, are combined in no ordinary measure, and with the crowning charm of that good-will and sympathy which only await citizens as worthy, head and heart, (in the very best sense of the epithet,) as he is. A sour, or conceited, or irregularly-living man might, it is possible, know his professional duties as well; but he would never be followed by his townsfolk with such eager and cheerful zeal, if my faith in the connection of Art and Society be founded upon any reality.

I could say more of Herr David's leading, as a thing in my experience entirely unique. I could dwell, too, upon the pleasant life he leads in his garden-house (the *beau idéal* of a German musician's residence), spent in a constant interchange of good offices, musical and social, with his townsmen and strangers *, unbroken by a shade, on

* I never enjoyed the luxury of chamber instrumental music so richly as among my friends at Leipsic. One day it took the form of pianoforte-playing of some new MS. trio, or some Beethoven sonata; another evening a quartett, only to be matched by the Zimmermann quartett at Berlin; sometimes an adagio by Bach; sometimes a mazurka or impromptu by Chopin: and all this was

his part, of envy or irritability, or those other petty feelings of cabal and intrigue which eat the hearts away of so many artists. But when a friend is in the case, self-restraint in the

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lavished with such an apparent ease and conformity to daily habit, as to lessen materially the burden of the obligation which, as an insignificant stranger, I should otherwise have felt. But the very kindness and *domesticity* of the pleasure, so to say, prevent my dwelling upon it minutely, if I would not break the plan I have laid down in printing from my journals. I cannot, however, pass a convocation made by Mendelssohn in honour of Moscheles (who was passing through Leipsic), at which I was present last Autumn, because in its scale and splendour it approached a public performance, while in its friendliness and ease it retained all the charm of "a little music by one's own fireside." The admirable concert orchestra was collected; and performed two of the Leonora overtures of Beethoven, and Mendelssohn's own picturesque overture known in England as "The Isles of Fingal," as well as accompanied the distinguished guest in one of his own concertos. Besides this, we had one of Mendelssohn's psalms, admirably sung by the amateurs of the place; the "Hommage à Handel" of Moscheles, played by its composer and Mendelssohn; and one of Sebastian Bach's concertos for three pianofortes. Perhaps, never was music so well played, or so exquisitely enjoyed; and I shall feel warmed and satisfied by the recollection of that evening as long as I retain memory or gratitude.

amount of praise should keep pace with fastidiousness of judgment. It is a cruel thing to load the true-hearted and highly cultivated with the *plaster* of fulsome laudation; and I would not have said as much as this, might not all that I have journalised be warranted to the full by the most cynical or preoccupied stranger, amateur or professional, who has ever assisted at one of the Leipsic Concerts.

For the perfection of these, however, as regards spirit and intention, one greater than even my excellent friend David is answerable, — I mean, of course, Mendelssohn. In his case, too, I feel that shrinking which makes it impossible, when with those one likes best and esteems the most highly, in good set phrase to rehearse their gifts and graces. Enough to say, that all that Education among a home-circle of brilliant and enlarged intelligences, and during an extensive course of foreign travel, could do to cultivate poetical genius, and to enlarge sympathies by Nature liberally given, has been done: — enough, that simplicity of heart has never been spoilt, nor integrity of purpose lost sight of;—that brilliant professional dis-

tinction, and a happy home, have been granted to the artist before he has reached the prime of his manhood, — things bringing with them enrichment, not exhaustion. And must we not own, that the phrase made use of by one of his early friends, "The boy came into the world upon a lucky day," has been the motto of his life? and shall we not readily conceive how the presence of such a person, to leaven and enkindle the artistic circles of a kind and friendly place, must tend, happily associated as he is with so rare a right-hand man, to bring the establishments under his care to the fullest health and perfection? Taking the subscription concerts of Leipsic as the most perfect expression of the musical spirit of Germany with which I have fallen in, it was impossible, in describing them, to overlook the elements which contribute so very largely to the creation and permanence of their success.

Exclusive of benefit and charitable concerts, the winter series of these entertainments extends to twenty performances. Nowhere in Germany is the *cramming* system of five con-

secutive hours of music resorted to; and I have seen our monstrous London *programmes* hoarded up and spelt over like curiosities from Nootka Sound or Ceylon: — but still, to provide variety for a score of evenings, in the present dearth of compositions of the highest order, requires no ordinary measure of intellectual energy. Yet this is done at Leipsic without parade or without charlatanry. The Directors of these concerts, a committee of gentlemen, — among whom are not to be forgotten Herr Rochlitz, the patriarch of German critics, and Herr Hartel *, whose name is historical among all

* I scarcely need remind the musician that Herrn Breitkopf and Hartel were among the earliest, and have been always among the most extensive, publishers of the modern classical music of Germany. In this respect, too, the amount of life and enterprise at Leipsic is wonderful. The orchestral scores, the oratorios, the operas, the theoretical works, &c. &c. &c., which its four presses pour out, must strike with amazement those who are familiar with the flimsy staple of the wares disseminated by the London publishers. Nor do Herrn Breitkopf and Hartel, and Kistner, and Hofmeister, and Peters content themselves with the coarse paper and coarse type which the German *littérateur* is obliged to be satisfied with from his publishers. I have never seen music so splendidly issued as by the second establishment.

those caring for continental music, — seconding Dr. Mendelssohn, open their doors liberally to every instrumental work that is new and of promise; taking good care, however, in doubtful cases, to assure the interest of the evening's performance by the repetition of some favourite and well-known production. Even in the four concerts I have attended, during my two visits to Leipsic, — besides two symphonies by Beethoven (precisely the pair I have heard at the Conservatoire), two symphonies by Mozart, two overtures by Weber, and one by Spohr, — a pianoforte and a violin, a trombone and a flute concerto, — I chanced to fall in with the whole of one act and the overture of M. Chelard's last opera, "Der Hermannschlacht," and a grand manuscript concert cantata by Marschner, with an overture, songs, and choruses, — one of those efforts which composers must ere long be driven to make, as the world grows more enlightened, to relieve the orchestra from the "three times skimmed sky-blue" iteration of opera songs and duets, without dresses, decorations, or the gestures

which on the stage are so moving. Neither Chelard's nor Marschner's effort was worth the labour bestowed upon it; but the want with us of such catholicity and enterprise as brought this music forward has gone far, by permitting audiences to remain within one unchanging and narrow circle, to destroy more than one of our musical establishments of high renown.* These very trials and hearings of all that rising contemporary talent can do, instead of seducing the love of an audience from its old objects of reverence, tend, by contrast, to make what is sterling more sterling, and what is grand grander; and to send listeners back

* Among other devices employed for giving interest to the programmes of the Leipsic Concerts, I cannot pass over the performance of Beethoven's four overtures to "Fidelio" on the same evening, to afford the curious means of comparison: or the series of three or more historical concerts, in which the effect meditated by Spohr in his strangely incoherent symphony was produced, by progressive selections of instrumental music, beginning with Bach and Handel. We are still too far from being ripe for such performances as these,— too largely apt to treat all public exhibitions as mere aimless amusements, where the most piquant novelty is the one thing best worth pursuing.

to the unfading masterpieces of Music with a sharpened relish. Never, indeed, did I hear the symphonies of Beethoven so intensely enjoyed as at Leipsic, and never so admirably performed. As regarded those works of the Shakspeare of music, I felt, for the first time in my life, richly and thoroughly satisfied beyond reserve or question. There was a breadth and freedom in their outlines, a thorough proportion in all their parts, a poetical development of all their choice and picturesque ideas, which fully compensated for the occasional want of the hyper-brilliancy and the hyper-delicacy, on the possession of which my friends in Paris boast themselves so vaingloriously. It was not hearing Beethoven played, — it was revelling among his noble creations; and with the most perfect security that nothing would interfere to break the spell, or to call you back from the Master's thought to the medium in which it was given forth. Then those small aggravations of emphasis, those slight retardations of time, neither finically careful nor fatiguingly numerous,—for which Imagination thirsts so

eagerly, so rarely to be gratified, — were all given; and with such ease and nature, that I felt the gift was no holiday effort, got up for once, but the staple mode of interpretation and execution belonging to the place. Till, indeed, I heard the Leipsic orchestra, — my first love, the Brunswick Festival, not forgotten, — I felt I had no right to say, "Now I am indeed in the musical Germany of which I have so long dreamed." Had I not heard it, I should not have ventured to print the strictures upon that marvel of mechanical perfection, the orchestra of the Conservatoire, which are recorded in a former page of these journals.

As regards *habitat*, the subscription concerts at Leipsic are but indifferently provided. The Gewand-haus, a moderately-sized room, is infinitely too small for the audience who crowd it, and pay their sixteen *groschen* for entrance (think of such a concert for two shillings!) with no vainglorious notions of exclusiveness, no tip-toe enthusiasm to trouble their brains, but from a sheer thorough-going love of the art, and a certainty that they will be gratified.

The ladies of the place occupy the centre of the room, sitting in two *vis-à-vis* divisions — that is, sideways to the orchestra. Behind them crowd the *herrn* so thickly, that any one going as late as half an hour before the music strikes up, will run a chance of being kneaded into the wall by the particularly substantial proportions of those before him, whom no good-natured wish to accommodate a stranger can make thin. More than once, by the obliging intervention of a friend at court, I was enabled to take refuge within the rails of the orchestra. This was not the best situation in the world for the whole effect, but it enabled me, almost by participation, to appreciate the untiring vigilance and industry of the performers, and the honest goodwill with which they not only betook themselves to their task, but regarded each other. The orchestra numbers some sixty or seventy performers; precisely the number, so Beethoven's biographers tell us, which the great master conceived to be the best suited to the adequate performance of his symphonies. The vocal music of these concerts is generally mainly

sustained by the presence of some one stranger engaged for the series, and such resident talent as the town affords. In two successive years, two of our countrywomen, Miss Novello and Mrs. A. Shaw, filled the former position with brilliant credit. In 1839, the young Belgian lady, Mademoiselle Meerti (who has since done her part in London in establishing the claims of her country as one rich in musicians) was the favourite of Leipsic. In 1840, things were less auspiciously ordered; a Mademoiselle Schloss, who had received much training as the resident lady, triumphantly maintaining her ground against Mademoiselle Meerti's successor. The latter, Mademoiselle List, stood upon the ground of her beauty. As regards her singing, I cannot conceive how it could ever have been brought to an end with any orchestra less admirably under conduct; and, after counting five notes in one bar and nine in another, in the vain hope of ascertaining what was the real *tempo* of the movement in which she was engaged, I went home penetrated with admiration at the courtesy of my Leipsic friends in playing out of time when "a lady was in the case."

Very pleasant were those concerts, and very pleasant — though any thing but English — the suppers which sometimes succeeded them,—when parties of nine or a dozen ladies and gentlemen would repair to one of the hotels, to do justice to the good things of its *speise-harte;* and the animated scene of the dinner was more gaily repeated, from the ladies being in evening-dress. To be sure, I could not help lamenting over the fresh and pretty toilettes that must have gone home, in some cases, saturated with tobacco-smoke; and it was sometimes difficult to hear a word that passed in the midst of the noise of the service of the table — the explosion of champagne corks — and the diapason of a violent and busy band of music, playing Strauss and Bellini and Auber with an untiring industry hard to sympathise with when the ears are full with Beethoven and Mozart. Such a Babel of mirth and good-fellowship, such a mingling of many odours, I never encountered elsewhere. I cannot wish that such a Leipsic fashion should be brought home to us, with the Leipsic style and conception of what orchestral music means. But there it

was natural, and hearty, and pleasant. Jean Paul speaks of "a crumpled soul:" a better scene for the straightening of the same could not be devised than those merry and obstreperous *finales*, especially if the favour of the misanthropist is to be propitiated by a dish of larks. Those delicate birds are nowhere to be found in such perfection as upon a Leipsic supper-table: and Music, as all the world knows, is a most potent sharpener of the appetite!

CHAP. II.

TRACES OF BACH.

The Chorus of the Concerts. — The Thomas-Schule. — The Thomas-Kirche. — The Interior reminding me of "Quintus Fixlein."—A Mass in a Lutheran Church. — The Manner of Execution. — The Old Days of the Thomas-Schule.—Music and Learning.—George Rhau. — The Reformation. — Luther a Promoter of Music, though an Iconoclast.— Slight Remembrances of Kühnau and Bach. — Music "of all Time." — Permanence a Characteristic of Bach's Style. — Bach still the Teacher in Leipsic. — Style of Music and Performance most relished in Leipsic. — Madame Schumann, with a Note on the "Kreissleriana." — Leipsic Taste accused by a visitor of a leaning towards the *Perruque*.

In describing the admirable features of the Leipsic Concerts, I must not forget the chorus. This, indeed, tells as significant a story to the speculative traveller as the drop-curtain of L'Académie Royale, or the Caryatides of the Berlin Opera House.

On my first visit to the Gewand-haus, being obligingly admitted to a rehearsal, I was struck

by the sight of half a dozen eager-looking intelligent lads, listening to every note of the orchestra with true German enthusiasm. At the concert, again, in the evening, when compelled, as I have said, to take shelter from the crowd behind the violins and double-basses, I was nearly thrust upon the demolition of a drum by the same troop. These were the boys of the Thomas-Schule, who are there educated to take part in all the religious musical services of the town, and afford, too, their assistance to its secular entertainments; having the privilege, in return, of being present on all occasions when public music is going on. I was sorry to hear (the case demands the reproof of commemoration) that the only instance of this privilege being rescinded was at the benefit concert of a young English songstress, who had made her foreign reputation by a winter's appearances at Leipsic.

Hard by one of the outlets of the old town,—where, but for the restraining girdle of walls, the mass of tall and crowded buildings seems as if it must *pour itself over* upon the gardens,—stands a

large irregular mass of grey stone, the principal member of which, with its high sloping roof, assists picturesquely to break the town "prospect," on which ever side it is contemplated. Close beneath it, you are shown a couple of windows in the grey wall which have an ancient but not a dreary aspect, overlooking as they do a cluster of flowering shrubs. The windows belong to the house of Sebastian Bach, who was for many years Cantor of the Thomas-Schule. All who have enterprise enough in the cause of good music to rise and fare forth at eight on the Sunday morning may hear the choristers of the still flourishing establishment sing in the church *their* musical services, before the prayers and the preaching commence.

The Thomas-Kirche, like most other of the German churches I know, is, internally, a lofty as well as a spacious building; and, though it be no less closely shorn of the *insignia* of Popery, it is infinitely less naked and bleak-looking than the Dom at Brunswick. The white walls, on which the stucco has been capriciously destroyed, are hung with galleries and pews like bird-cages,

irregularly disposed,—some glazed, others open; a few decorated with escutcheons, a few with carving and gilding. It would be difficult, I suspect, to explain why the sight of the interior of the church, at that early hour, and of the not very numerous congregation, recalled to me Jean Paul's "Quintus Fixlein," and his other homely pictures of German life, which Mr. Carlyle, and less gifted scholars, have given to the English. But so it was: and as I sat on one of the hard benches in the aisle, waiting for a few minutes till the exercise should begin, I seemed to take a closer glance at the devout and primitive life of the country than had yet been afforded to me; and I felt startled when the first bars, played by a well-selected orchestra led by Herr David, introduced me at once to the sweet and holy "Kyrie" of Beethoven's mass in C major. Somehow or other, the pair of papistical candles on the altar did not shock my Lutheran English eyes so much as the sound of music, with which the genuflexion of priests and the diffusion of incense is associated, startled my ear.

The boys sang remarkably well; and the music requires no common skill and certainty. There is a chromatic modulation in the "Qui tollis," very difficult to execute in tune,—at which I have heard some of our most redoubtable artists hesitate; but it went over so smoothly, and without force, that I scarcely knew when it had passed. The boy, too, to whom was allotted the principal *solo* (according to the ordinance bequeathed to us from olden times, which denies Woman a voice in prayer and praise no less than in state affairs), had tones less freshly crude, and thus more welcome to the ear, than those of any urchin I have ever heard. He was a clever musician, too, as I had often occasion to notice at concert rehearsals; with an arch, audacious eye, and that ready vivacity of look and gesture which seemed to promise the stage an excellent singer on some future day.

It was more than musically interesting thus to stumble upon a relic of the old church foundations, amongst which all Art received its first cultivation and encouragement; and to find

one of those very establishments which, by its mysteries and moralities enacted on high festival days, afforded to all Christendom the earliest ideas of operatic representation, still remaining, little impaired by change and revolution, to lend support and encouragement to secular Music.

As long ago as the year 1213, a society of Augustine monks, among other principal objects of education for the good citizens of Leipsic in their monastic school, established also an institution for the training of a band, whose chief duties should be the musical services of the church: duties not held inconsistent with philosophical studies or classical attainments. And hence, from the earliest foundation of the Thomas-Schule of Leipsic, the Cantores (masters of music) seem to have been equally distinguished, equally reverenced, with the other teachers of learning and science at this school. And, in the annals of the establishment, the names of those who taught "plain song" keep loving companionship with those who expounded the dead languages or the

secrets of Philosophy. Passing many worthy names, it was only twenty years before the Reformation came, to load all that was of monkish origin with opprobrium, that we find in the records of the Thomas-Schule the name of a Cantor dwelt upon with particular emphasis. This was George Rhau, the friend of Melancthon and Luther; who, among other compositions, wrote a "Veni sancte Spiritus," which — on the occasion of the opening speech of a Leipsic disputation by Mosellanus, then Baccalaureus— he caused his scholars unexpectedly to strike up. Its effect was so solemn and overcoming, that the hearers fell upon their knees with one accord.

When the Reformation came, the Thomas-Schule was, of course, remodelled; but, though its papistical colour was effaced, this did not imply the severance of Music from the severer branches of learning. The idolatries of the Mass were to be abolished; but, to deprive worship of one of its most natural utterances, which the priests and Levites in the Jewish Temple and the disciples in the Christian Gethsemane had alike employed, never entered

into the brain of the Master-reformer — himself a musician by nature and by cultivation. Every where, on the contrary, did Luther inculcate the importance of the honest study, as well as of the chaste and dignified employment of the art. There are few German melodies of the epoch which have kept their place beside the tunes of his *Choral-Buch*. And the tendency of his mighty Reformation, though it was doubtless destructive to the imitative arts, inasmuch as it struck at the root of that hero-worship which was the originating principle of Painting and Sculpture, so far from bringing degradation to the musician, tended rather to exalt him to a companionship with the highest and most learned teachers of mankind. Thus the Cantor of the Thomas-Schule fared no worse under the new than under the old dispensation.* The honourable nature of

* In the autumn of 1840, the number of scholars on the foundation was fifty-eight. The qualifications for admission are—good morals, capacity for learning, and some natural musical aptitude; and the course of instruction is ample, and in concord with the original purposes of the school, that Music should neither be neglected for graver

his civic position, under a stricter rule, could not fail to incite him to a wide and noble course of action; and accordingly we find that, after many less eminent worthies, the predecessor of Bach—Kühnau—was elected organist of the Thomas-Kirche at the early age of seventeen years; the election being a consequence of the great sensation excited by the performance, at the Leipsic Fair, of one of the stripling's compositions by the students of the University. On his election he availed himself of every opportunity to prosecute the studies of jurisprudence, the mathematical sciences, and the Greek language; and, besides composing and writing many treatises on Music, he was a good Italian and French scholar, and translated several works from those languages. At the age of thirty-three he was elected to the direc-

studies, nor deemed unworthy to bear them company. The Thomas-Schule has turned out many accomplished musicians — Herr Reissiger, the well-known composer and director of the Dresden Opera, among the number — and was described to me as one of the two most important establishments in North Germany,—the other being the Kreutz-Schule of Dresden.

torship of the music of the Leipsic University, holding this conjointly with the cantorship or musical superintendence of the Thomas-Schule.

Of Kühnau's more eminent successor it is alike hard to speak or to be silent: difficult to praise him well — impossible to forget him. He was with me every where in North Germany. I thought of him in the clean old-world market-place of the town of his birth, Eisenach; with its church among the linden-trees, and its quaint fountain in the centre of the square; and its flying dolphins and dragons, which lean out from the high battlements of the houses, giving to that work-a-day thing, a spout, an air as quaintly graceful as Elizabethan fantasy gave in England to that ugly smoke-conduit, a chimney. I thought of his homely, affectionate, conscientious ancestors, by religious persecution driven from their native Hungary to take refuge in the Red Land of Thuringia*; — of the well-known meetings, when, on anniversaries and holidays, the dispersed branches of the family used to assemble

* See Forkel, and the other biographers of Sebastian Bach.

to make merry and sing edifying or jovial strains; and of the other recorded traits of their simple and loving affection which indicate warm hearts as well as plain lives and strong bodies. I thought of the early difficulties with which little Sebastian had to struggle; not, indeed, great or terrible, as compared with the ogres and giants which other musicians had slain, — but sufficient to prove his nerve and perseverance and resolution to become of weight and worship in his art: — how he sat up on moonlight nights, for want of candle, to copy the whole book of instrumental studies, the loan of which was refused to him by his brother — the one churlish Bach; — how he walked on foot from Arnstadt to Lubeck to hear Dietrich Buxtehude play, like any other stout craftsman, after the fashion of his country, fighting his way through Germany to perfect himself in his calling; and how, without revealing himself, he studied, for some months, the master's style in secret. I thought of the many tales of the patience, and modesty, and good citizenship which distinguished his manhood and old age; — how much self-respect

withal he never failed to show when the dignity of his art, or his own acquirements, were in question. And could all these things be forgotten under the very windows of the house — in that very church — where, for twenty years, he had planned and executed that magnificent series of works, which was never young and never will be old?

When I say "never young," I would submit that novelty (in the vulgar acceptation of the term) is not the most salient characteristic of the "Sebastiana." The orchestra, in the time of Bach, hardly existed, save in the simplest form; and I do not know that he did much to enlarge its resources. The organ had been already brought to a rare perfection; and, admirable as he was in its treatment, in the management of its rich tones and splendid convolutions of harmony, the best of organists was then a less dazzling wonder, a less potent wizard, than the Southern singer, who not only diffused a taste of rhythmical melody, but also the treasures of a vocal execution, which have never failed to prove the most fascinating of musical attractions. There is

every thing in Bach to impress — there is nothing in him to intoxicate. He had no chance, for the moment, against the Italians in Germany. Besides being in temperament and training indifferent to dramatic effect, he was too robust and self-asserting, like Hasse, utterly to denationalize himself; — like Graun, obsequiously to shape his style to the caprices of a sovereign. Though Zelter accuses his works of a certain French colour, which, at times, destroys their utter integrity, there is a nerve, a sinew, and a nationality in every line of them, which — had no subsequent composer, no Gluck or Beethoven, ever taken the same lofty ground — would make of his works a sufficient bulwark to which a great and reflective people fly for the security of their Art against foreign invasion. But, though he was honoured and esteemed at the time of his appearing, the Church was old — the Theatre new; and, for a while, as regarded influence, novelty carried off the palm.

That those, however, who never looked young never will look old, is an aphorism

applicable in Art as well as in physiognomy. Bach was one of these. I can never hear one of his sublime combinations, be it on the smallest scale, without the petty subdivisions of cycle and epoch fading utterly away,—without feeling myself more completely at the feet of a teacher than before any other musician. In them, Imagination is chastened, not denied play; — the executive power of human ingenuity called forth to the utmost, yet without the possibility of the ear for an instant mistaking the means for the end, — that which is outward and transient for that which is inward and perennial. School after school has passed away, form after form been exploded, — and now, when so much has been tried and judged and forgotten, the young musicians of Europe are falling upon the works of Bach as upon a mine of virgin treasure. Thus, also, Milton will never become obsolete, or the Greek drama antiquated. Both will remain as long as the frame of the world—indestructible citadels and beacons, in which Truth remains secure from harm —a light of guidance!

If (while in Leipsic) I rhapsodise about

Bach — that least rhapsodical of all composers — it is because every hour's experience confirmed my first impressions that his traditions still leaven the musical taste of the town. The excellent understanding with which all the measures of that most accomplished and liberal of music-directors, Dr. Mendelssohn, have been met is at once caused and effected by his being steeped in the knowledge and love of the Master of Leipsic. It was there, at all events, that I first began seriously to believe that, even in one and the same country, style might be found as delicately various and as numerous in its varieties as those of the *genus* for the moment most in request among the florists. It is true that, without stirring from home, I had long fancied that I could distinguish a Dublin singer by his disposition to drag the *tempo* of his music (in which he shares the idiosyncrasy of the Belgians). I had long known, again, how far a peculiar dialect influences vocal tone, by some acquaintance with our own Lancashire, Norfolk, and Middlesex chorus-singers. But it was only when the comparison of the *manners* of Berlin,

Leipsic, and Dresden was forced upon me within a short space of time that I ventured to recognise the existence of shades of mode, humour*, and tendency, hard to describe, yet as constant in their recurrence as the cut of a leaf or the shape of a blotch of colour (to ramble back to my garden-metaphor). With such recognition a new train of research and speculation seemed to open itself, the pursuit of which, if life and leisure permit, may perhaps one day do its part in assisting me in a meditated task — that of tracing back Music to its primal causes.

But, confining myself to my present "list of cases," certain it is that at Leipsic I found that the merits most cordially admired in instrumental composition and performance were a sober breadth of *reading* — grandeur without ponderosity —

* I may add that "the Vienna pianoforte-players" have past into a proverb, as illustrating brilliant and florid style on that instrument. In Dr. Burney's tour, a similar apportionment is also made ; Vienna being then, according to him, "the most remarkable for fire and invention, Manheim for neat and brilliant execution, Berlin for counterpoint, and Brunswick for taste."

expression without caricature—light and shade without needless flourish. Whether I was listening to the orchestra, or to the pianoforte-playing of Mendelssohn, or to the *organ-playing* on the piano of Madame Schumann (best known in England by her maiden-name of Clara Wieck) who commands her instrument with the enthusiasm of a Sybil, and the grasp of a man,—or to the leading or the quartett playing of my incomparable friend David,—the same characteristic preferences forced themselves on my notice, to the satisfaction of the heart and mind, if not always of the imagination. A Leipsic audience seemed to me difficult, and perhaps over-exquisite, in its likings and dislikings, but not captious without the power of giving a reason. Among Beethoven's symphonies, for instance, the "Pastorale" is the least in favour, and the worst-played: the taste of the town not tending towards musical punning, or (to speak more reverently) to such literal imitation as calls up rivulets, birds, and thunder-storms, even when wielded by a Beethoven. Among Moscheles' pianoforte music, his fine broad

duett, the "Hommage à Handel" is a never-tiring favourite. In spite of the residence there of Herr Schumann, the German Berlioz, whose "Kreissleriana*," and other pianoforte compositions, are in the very wildest strain of extravagant mysticism, a regular concerto will probably be better relished at Leipsic than the most airy and delicate piece of fantasy of the newer schools. "*C'est un peu perruque ici!*" said —— to me one day; a little chagrined, I suspect, at my smiling at his enthusiastic arrogation to Paris of all the musical excellence

* The very title of these compositions, by recalling to the German reader one of Hoffmann's most fantastic creations, will acquaint him with their eccentricity and singularity, and *their design of not designing any settled effect.* To those who know not Hoffmann's writings in the original or translation I almost despair of unriddling the word in question. Band-master Kreissler, of whom a sort of Shandean use is made by that strange humourist, is an eccentric musical enthusiast; hence the fragments bearing his name (and bearing out his character) are as near regular and symmetrical musical compositions as Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" is to a complete epic. Herr Schumann has too much talent and learning to lose himself for ever in such mazes, which lead to nothing, when the broad highways of the art lie open before him.

now remaining in the world. "Perhaps," replied I, "you would call bread, or wine, or any thing else that nourishes without unhealthy stimulus, *perruque*, also?—or think, with the lady in the comedy, that spasms and fits of epilepsy are but an extravagance of health?" "Bah!" was the answer, as he turned upon his heel on his road to L'Académie and the Conservatoire of the French metropolis.

TWO VISITS

TO

DRESDEN.

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CHAPTER I.

THE OPERA AND ITS ENVIRONS. — 1839.

Railroad Travelling in Germany. — A National Propensity. — The Spirit of Dresden. — A Quatuorzain written on the Bruhl Terrace. — The Sights and Curiosities of the Place. — The Music I heard at Dresden. — A Country Walk. — The Opera-House. — The "Euryanthe" of Weber. — Its Cast. — Madame Schröder Devrient. — Herr Tichatschek. — The Orchestra. — The ugly Chorus. — Sketch of "Euryanthe."—The Absurdity of its *Libretto*.—"Cymbeline" destroyed. — The chivalresque Spirit of its Music. — The opening Chorus. — The part of *Adolar*. — The part of *Euryanthe;* its brilliancy. — Her *Bravura* in the Third Act, and its Shaksperian Close. — Strong Effect produced by the Music. — "Der May." — The Environs of Dresden. — Schiller's Closet. — Weber's Country House. — Pillnitz. — A Court Custom of

Saxony. — Royal Amateurship (with a Note from Dr. Burney). — Strange Forms of Royal Patronage.

THE railroad travelling of Germany has features which are all its own. In England you are whirled along with an irresistible rapidity which entirely precludes the possibility of thought, or conversation, or enjoyment. The journey is a disagreeable, bewildering dream, made up of several blasts of the shrill steam-whistle — a few tunnels — a few broken clamours, timid or troublesome, of passengers on their entrance and exit — perhaps a few broken limbs, — the best part of which is its close. In Belgium there is more to observe: rich farms, stately belfries embroidered with tracery and ornament, are to be seen as you are swept — more leisurely than at home — from one town to another. But there is an amount of confusion and uncertainty which keeps the mind anxious. So many lines meet and diverge, and so awkwardly is the transmission of baggage managed, that it is seven chances to one but, while you are upon your road to the Rubenses at Antwerp, your "mails" may be

scouring along the rails to Ans (Liege). Hood's story of the bewildered lady, strong in her own foresight, who spent the day in travelling backwards and forwards betwixt Ghent and Ostend, owing to the want of her proper understanding, and her own prudence "in never getting out,"— is hardly a caricature. But betwixt Leipsic and Dresden no such whimsical casualties can happen. On the other hand, during the four hours which are to be expended in exchanging the town of Sebastian Bach for the Florence of Germany, you will assuredly see, gentle observer, a national propensity in its ripest development;—I mean the disposition of the best-hearted hosts and soundest instrumentalists of Europe to stop on every possible occasion — "*etwas zu essen.*"

I cannot describe how whimsically this wonderful appetite struck me on my constant journeys to and fro in Dresden. The train I chiefly used starts from Leipsic an hour after the early dinner; when the copious repast might surely, one would have thought, have sufficed for a part, at least, of the afternoon. No such thing. At

every one of the six or eight stations between the two towns — fruit, cakes, cups of broth, glasses of brandy, squares of sodden pastry with plums imbedded therein, biscuits, sandwiches, plums, pears, and other garden *etcetera*, are proffered to the caravan, from baskets of hawkers and in the station-houses. Nor are they proffered in vain: — old and young, women and men, — already provided, in nine cases out of ten, with a travelling provision against famine,—partake of them with a zeal and an intrepidity which, every time I witnessed it, recalled to me Petruchio's disdainful exclamation —

"Nothing but sit and sit, and eat and eat!"

and which take such various forms, that, within the compass of those four hours, a Cruickshank could easily find matter for a series of "Administrations of food."

Comfortable in beguiling the way as were these interludes, they were not precisely the best preparations for Dresden I could imagine. The Saxon capital, both on first sight and subsequent experience, has impressed me with a peculiar feeling not to be described, perhaps,

without the entertainer of it being considered Della Cruscan and fantastic: at least, not in work-a-day prose. Perhaps it may with less offence be intimated in a quatuorzain.

WRITTEN ON THE BRUHL TERRACE,
OCTOBER, 1840.

THERE hangs a tranquil and peculiar spell
O'er dome, and ample bridge, and rapid stream,
And dim fantastic palace, where the gleam
Of ghostly shapes, methinks, would glimmer well
At dead midnight. Autumn should ever dwell,
Rich, fading town, with thee! Here I could dream
Whole days away o'er some sweet solemn theme
Of mystic Fancy, careless how the bell
Of noisy Life importunately toll'd
Its children to their tasks. Aye, and such hours,
By some esteem'd more worthless than the flowers
Which drop in silence ere their bells unfold,
Show not our heaviest debt for wasted powers,
On Truth's eternal chronicle enroll'd!

Even the excitements of the far-famed Gallery, with its Madonna del Sisto, its Reading Magdalen, and its Christo della Moneta, where I lingered for two reverent hours every morning, till eye and mind could receive no more,

could not neutralise the agreeable and soothing impression which the stately Saxon city produced on my mind. Of the ways of its people I know nothing beyond the universal report, which apportions to it a cheerful and cultivated society of refined intelligences. But I have never staid in a town in which the idea of complete insulation brought with it so little of dreariness,— where so many thoughts and feelings and fancies seemed to rise up as companions. I can picture to myself no better residence for any one occupied in the absorbing task of imaginative creation: and, to push speculation one point further, I never passed the door of Tieck's house, in the Altmarkt, without feeling as if a certain harmony existed between his fantastic and spiritual tales and the city of his adoption. But this, perhaps, is fond trifling. While, however, I cannot forget that my holidays in Dresden must be numbered among those times of rich acquisition to which the mind best loves to refer, I am not going to trespass on any one's patience by enumerating the treasures of the Gallery. Poets and paint-

ers have already expatiated upon these; one of the last and most eloquent of their chroniclers possessing in a rare degree the power of combining those cadences of style which tell of a harmonious mind and those thoughts which declare a searching but not a captious eye: I mean Mrs. Jameson. The curiosities, too, of the Rust Kammer and the Green Vaults, — of the collection of prints, and the huge assemblage of crockery and china of all Celestial epochs at the Japanese palace, have been counted over again and again in tour and guide-book. But the musical pleasures of Dresden are marked with "a white stone" in the calendar of my experiences, and not to be passed so summarily. There, on my visit in 1839, I first made acquaintance with the "Euryanthe" of Weber.

The practicability of quickening musical appetite by a legitimate country walk, taken ten minutes before entering a theatre, was a pleasant variety in my play-going experiences. Suffering, as I own to have done, under a fidget of impatience to hear a work I had so long ardently desired to hear—and my appetite

piqued to its keenest edge by the perpetual operatic disappointments I had been undergoing during my German progress,—I might have foreseen what the chimes told me just as I was leaving the beautiful Elbe-bridge for the space in front of the barn-like theatre*, namely, that I was three quarters of an hour too soon. Away, then, I strolled down through the Zwinger-gardens, along a solemn avenue of chestnut-trees, at the end of which stands a large orangery, and, turning through a court-yard, was directly in a *bona fide* meadow, stretching down to the placid Elbe, garnished with pollard trees, such as Paul Potter loved to paint, among

* Since my last visit to Dresden, the new and magnificent structure towering by the side of that meanest of all mean temples to the Drama has been opened. While I have been transcribing and arranging these journals for the press, it has been impossible to forbear being struck by the number of last things they register. And I have "laid the flattering unction to my soul" that they may not be utterly valueless, as improving a time of expectation by illustrating a period just closed. So many of the musical institutions mentioned in them are more than middle-aged, that it is impossible to regard the past without also adverting to the future.

which Paul Potter's comely cows were slowly going home to be milked; and divided by a brook—positively a brook, with stepping-stones. Perhaps sunset never made a lovelier picture of Dresden than on that evening. There was hardly an air to stir the leaves; smoke there was none to curl; and the sky, glowing with all the hues of gold and crimson and violet, made a festal pageant of the domes and spires rising beyond the Elbe-bridge. The beauty of the weather, and the rarity of such a pleasure (as Covent-garden Market and St. James's Park could testify to, had they tongues) by way of prelude to an act of play-going, tempted me to loiter to the last possible moment. And yet, after finding myself comfortably installed in my *sperrsitz*, I had still time to spare before the overture commenced, — time to say to myself, "Well, after all, poor Weber was perhaps better here than at Berlin!" I had been looking at the bright side of his Dresden residence, — the winning and picturesque beauty of its environs.

The cast which the peculiarly tidily-printed

zettel revealed to me was strong. Madame Schröder Devrient played the part of Euryanthe, and Herr Tichatschek that of the hero Adolar. She was acting with all the old power and pathos that earned for her in England the title of "the Queen of tears," and singing the terribly difficult music of the part with a force and freshness I found it totally impossible to account for, save on the hypothesis that some miracle had created her voice anew since she was last in London. My ear has not that singular decision which retains a memory of tone, independently of pitch — a positive faëry gift belonging to the highest order of musical organisations; and it did not occur to me that the cause of Madame Schröder Devrient's apparently renovated clearness and purity might lie in the flat diapason of the orchestra. It is so, however; the Dresden band being nearly half a tone lower than any I have ever heard. But this flatness threw over the whole performance of a powerful and brilliant orchestra, most carefully directed by Herr Reissiger, a languor which —knowing as I did the music well, and missing none of its points — puzzled me very nearly as

much as the restored juvenility of the *prima donna*.

Among the tenors of Germany, Herr Tichatschek bears a high reputation; and few, in any country, have ever crossed the stage with an ampler proportion of natural advantages. He is of the right height — handsome — his voice strong, sweet, and extensive, taking the *altissimo* notes of its register in chest tones. He possessed, too, in 1839, a youthful energy of manner calculated to gain the favour of all who hear and see him. But, on returning to Dresden in 1840, I found that he had abused this energy to the evident deterioration of his voice and style; and there was cause to fear that a few seasons more may rivet him in bad habits never to be thrown off, such as sink their owner among the disappointing legion of those who "might have done great things." I heard no one in Germany, however, who was better qualified to sustain the glorious music belonging to the part of Adolar.

The Dresden chorus I found clear, forcible, and paying the utmost German attention to light and shade — far more satisfactory, in short,

than the chorus of Berlin. Some of the *soprani*, however, had an intolerably metallic harshness of tone in the upper notes of their voices, which set my teeth on edge, and made me shiver whenever I felt a *sforzando* coming on. The defect was forced upon notice most especially in Weber's opera; but I recognised it again, last Autumn, in the slighter and more moderately composed music of "Masaniello." I think, too, that not even among our opera *figurantes* before Easter did I ever see such a regiment of ill-favoured women. Framed by them, Madame Schröder Devrient seemed to have recovered not only the bloom of her voice but also of her youthful graces. Yet more strikingly did their excessive uncomeliness (one year older) set off the expressive and dark features of Mademoiselle Anschutz, whom I saw, in 1840, play the mute part of Fenella to their Market and Fishermen's chorus. One is never so struck by the obtrusiveness of ugliness on the French stage. Intrinsically frightful enough, as the Graces know, are some not merely of the back-ground figures, but of the

principal personages who figure on the theatrical arenas of Paris; but, from Dejazet downwards, they contrive to turn awkwardness into grace, irregularity into piquancy, and Age itself "into favour and prettiness,"—by what spell, must remain a mystery which no familiarity can ever unravel to an English or a German inquirer.

But enough of these trifles and executive details, which, as the opera proceeded, broke upon me one by one in spite of the fascination exercised over me by its music. "Euryanthe" is too little known in England as yet. One day it must become familiar here, as the most remarkable expression of passion in Music which the lyric drama has hitherto possessed. Nothing short of some such transcendent excellence could have carried off a story so confused and incomprehensible as was furnished to poor Weber by way of text. It is difficult to understand what freak of prudery drove the German adaptors of the exquisite "Cymbeline" of Shakspeare so utterly to transform and distort and weaken its incidents. Why

Lysiart, the boasting and malevolent Iachimo of the opera, should not of himself be sufficient to lie away the honour of its heroine, by way of winning his wager; — why Eglantine, the she-fiend associated with him, should bear such a mortal hatred to the heroine, — and how a ring stolen from a dead woman's tomb should be as damning a proof to Adolar of Euryanthe's infidelity as the original description of "the mole cinque-spotted," and the production of the ring from Imogen's own finger to the loyal Leonatus, — are puzzles which can hardly fail to engage all who ever condescend to seek for reality and coherence in a *libretto*. The impossibility of their solution, however, well nigh destroyed Weber's *chef-d'œuvre*, by making the work all but unintelligible. Most vexatious is it that another of the few first-rate operas which the German repertory possesses, the "Zauberflöte" of Mozart, should thus be dragged downwards by a foolish and entangled story. As regards "Euryanthe," I cannot but think that much might be done to simplify and to remodel, and would fain see the book in the

hands of some well-skilled but not over-arrogant dramatist.

Were I called upon to name the opera which has the most excited me, musically and not dramatically to speak, I should cite this same "Euryanthe." Years ago, when wandering aimlessly over the pianoforte score, and tantalised by indications of melody which then, owing to breaks of rhythm and strangenesses of harmony, I was unable to follow out or comprehend, I had been told (and Self-conceit had accepted the character as a truth) that the music was crude, incomprehensible, and far-fetched; and I had let it lie by, more unwilling at every new acquisition by straining my sympathies to spoil them. I hope it is not self-conceit of a worse kind which makes me now wonder where the difficulty and where the crudity of "Euryanthe" are gone. Some far-fetchedness there is: the rhythms are constructed on unusual forms; there is no prophesying, by the best-practised listener, of the change or chord which is next to come — but this is felt in closet study far more than in stage intercourse: while, on the other hand, for

character, colour, melody, and the boldest rendering of the strongest emotions, whether of tenderness, wonder, pity, passion, terror, ecstasy, or vengeance, I cannot but feel the music unparagoned.

To justify this catalogue of attributes a little, I would fain call attention to the treatment of the chorus in the first scene, by way of illustrating Weber's mastery over character and colour. If a higher and more chivalrous strain exists in Music than the antiphonic song of knights and ladies which opens the story after the brilliant and stately overture has subsided, it has yet to be made public. Yet of what an exquisite simplicity is Weber's chorus! There is the joy of high-born youth and beauty in every note of the stanza given to the *soprani;* a touch of tenderness nothing short of Shaksperian in its close —

setting off in the happiest contrast the glorious burst of male voices which immediately

succeeds. In this the incidental shade of ruggedness, distinctive of the sex, —

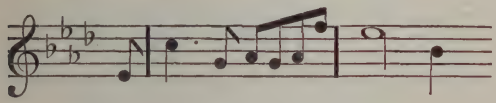
— is hardly less masterly. How charming throughout, too, is the employment of the accompaniment, which ever and anon resumes its measures, gay and jubilant, but by no means such as could be mistaken for those of peasant gaiety or jubilee, — and, at length, flows broadly forth into a minuet of such a grave and ample grandeur, as to remind us of the "solemn dancing" which formed so important a part of all old court festivities.

More marvellous, because it is more boldly loose of rhythm, and called forward to do more, is the use of the chorus in the second act: beginning with a flowing strain of knightly joy and homage; then, — as the false Iachimo of the opera contrives, by his base artifices, to blacken the fame of the heroine past the possibility of her explanation or excuse, — passing

through the gradations of unbelief, inquiry, conviction, contempt, anathema! Recitative is not freer from obvious trammels than this wonderful series of movements; and when, at last, the knights all turn away from Euryanthe as a traitress, the ban of their indignation falls on the ear and on the heart with as much force in its obstreperous violence as if it were one of those old maledictions which had so terrible a power to crush and to annihilate in the days of Feudalism.

Nor is the chivalresque spirit I have ascribed to this opera more eminently displayed in its general treatment than in the delineation of its principal characters. To begin with that of Adolar, — because he is first produced after the minuet in the opening scene: though his Romance, "Unter blühn der Mandelbaümen," be written in the French couplet style — a form, indeed, to which Weber showed no disinclination, — there is a full-hearted and manly tenderness in the strain, of which I know no example in French composition. The whole hero's part, I may say, bears

this heroic stamp, — whether in the scene where he throws down his gage to the asperser of Euryanthe's honour when he repeats the martial subject of the earlier part of the overture, — or whether when, in his song of expectation in the second act, he gives — because he is alone — a broader vent to his manly rapture in that delicious second melody,



which, also, has been wrought into the prelude of the drama, and prepares the hearer for a love-story of engrossing depth and passion, or Music has no meaning.

I cannot recall a more delicious example of calm succeeding excitement, than follows the challenge scene I have already mentioned in Euryanthe's *entrata*, "Glöklein im Thale." Here, especially, no pianoforte arrangement can give the slightest idea of the exquisite orchestral effect caused by the simple alternation of the stringed and wind instruments, and the happy use of the searching and voluptuous

tones of the violoncello. Not that the voice is either drowned, or secondary, or uninteresting, as in some of Spohr's songs, where the subtlety of orchestral texture claims admiration. The animation of the air rises as it proceeds; and the heart, at first blanked by pauses and suspenses totally new to it, is, ere the close comes, raised to such rare pleasure as I know not how else may be awakened, save by some of the deep, true, tender, and womanly outpourings of affection of Shakspeare's real Imogen! — such an one, for instance, as the following, which, at the onset, gives us the key to the entire character: —

"I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say. Ere I could tell him
How I would think on him, at certain hours,
Such thoughts, and such; or I could make him swear
The shes of Italy should not betray
Mine interest and his honour; or have charg'd him
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
I am in heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set
Betwixt two charming words — comes in my father," &c.

Better known than this *entrata* is Euryanthe's *bravura*,—the quartett which closes the first act,

and is the expression of the second change of the character — from tranquil but most tender recollection to delight in the approach of reunion. From this point the part is conducted to its close with a rare vividness and brilliancy. But while it embraces the extremes of rapture and despair, its passion is saved from monotony by the exquisite variety and closeness with which sound is adapted to sense. For instance, — though excitement can hardly speak plainer in Music than in both pieces, — how totally and admirably different is the sentiment of the duet in the second act,

"Hin nimm die seele mein,"*

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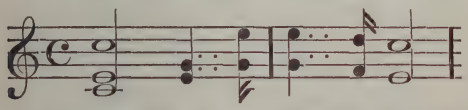
* In the main phrase of this most effective composition,



it would almost seem as if Weber had borrowed his *motivo* from "Il Tancredi" of Rossini. But if the harshest construction is to be put upon coincidence, the plagiarism is amply atoned for by the grace, variety, and intense expression of the second part; — how different from the mechanical braying of trumpets and beating of drums with which Italian composers, in their idleness or

from that of the *allegro* to the grand *scena* in the third act! where the delirious intensity of longing, quickened by a gleam of hope, rises to a height of intermingled ecstasy and pain — of panting suspense and anxious anticipation striving for utterance, with a force which must hurry the speaker onward to death or madness. As an example of rhythm capriciously broken for the production of the most exciting effects, I know of nothing like that air; — especially when, by the entrance of the supporting chorus, on the return of the theme, its irregularity is brought into a clearer light.* The close of

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their incompetence, never fail to fill up the blank between the first enunciation of a theme and its repetition!

* Not to interrupt the flow of fantastic speculation, or to become unnecessarily tedious, I will spare the reader the passage in which I noted, after the lights, the shadows of "Euryanthe;"—I mean the black and villanous characters of Eglantine and Lysiart. The latter is, musically, as splendid a creation as the hero and heroine. His duet with Eglantine, at the opening of the second act, and all his morsels of *solo* in the grand concerted pieces, rise to the highest point in the expression of evil passion and duplicity. His comrade in guilt is less intelligible, in spite of the care with which Weber has

the scene, too, when the singer sinks exhausted by her emotion, and the voices of the rough hunters, who bear her away on a litter of boughs and leaves, die away into a grave and melancholy silence, is in the highest strain of picturesque invention. O! had Weber but been intrusted with such a situation and such poetry as occur in the original play, where the rudely-nurtured princes, bending over the dead body of Fidele,

. . . . " the bird
Whom they had made so much of,"

pour out their sorrow in the most deeply mournful and artlessly manly of all dirges, — delicate as the air, but rurally homely as the cavern and the trees to whose echoes it was sung, — what music might he not have written! To Beethoven of right belong the Lears, and the Othellos, and the Macbeths of Shakspeare; and

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labelled her with a peculiarly significant and serpentine phrase. She is as much a *walking* Fury, and, thus, as superfluous to the interest the story excites, as is the walking lover or the walking (and very moral) father of sentimental comedy.

I am heretic enough to lament that his gigantic genius did not engage itself in the illustration of some of those creations of our immortal poet — if illustrated they must be in Music; — but to Weber, such dramas of romantic fantasy as the "Winter's Tale," "Cymbeline," and "The Tempest." He was, what Hogg delighted to call himself, "the king of the mountain and faëry school." With all his wondrous novelty and invention of means, his is music in spirit belonging to an olden time, when there were omens whispered in the woods, and battles foretold by the blood-red phantoms that brandished their arms and waved their banners in the West. The fancy of it is not untinctured with superstition; the hue upon it is either the pearly light of Dream-land, or that gorgeous tint which streams through some blazoned window garnished "with many a quaint device!"

I could write for a volume, and still leave untold the thousand associations and fantasies awakened by this most fascinating composer; and which crowded round me at Dresden, as I sat listening to the "Euryanthe," so as mar-

vellously to put out of court for the moment "those prosaic temporalities"—Time and Place. They followed me home across the Elbe-bridge; they mixed themselves up in my dreams: no bad preparation for a two days' ramble into that most rare and peculiar passage of scenery of any I am acquainted with — Saxon Switzerland and the Elbe valley. And I got into a little carriage I had hired for the journey, at six o'clock on the following morning, to the tune of

Indeed, the sunshine was so glorious and the air so exquisitely balmy, that, but for the yellow leaves, I could easily have cheated myself into fancying that the flower-month was come again.

The environs of Dresden are beautiful: the suburban houses show more marks of a refined taste in floriculture than I have elsewhere seen in Germany. The road rises gently; and the city, seen as I beheld it,—with the mist of early day

wreathing the beehive-like dome of Our Lady's Church and the spires round it, and the Elbe below and behind the bridge lying under a mantle of deep empurpled shadow, — makes as fair a town-picture as one of those splendid clusters of Italian architecture which Gaspar Poussin loved to build in his landscapes. As we advance further, the banks of the Elbe are striped and dotted with vineyards, among which the rough road winds; almost every half mile curving so as to pass through or escape some of the clean red-roofed *witz*-es (*witz* being as favourite a termination to the names of villages near Dresden as *rode* is in the Harz) which, half composed of garden-houses, half of cottages, are as tempting nooks as poet or musician could retreat to for summer residence. Tottering over the road, like the last tower of a broken-down fortress, and clinging to the wall, which keeps the soil up to the roots of the vines, a tiny closet is shown, where Schiller wrote his "Don Carlos." Another little mansion — but a modest one even for a house in a German *weinberg* — saw the birth of Weber's "Oberon." This last is

about half-way betwixt the beautiful city and that wild and elvish district, where gigantic rocks, of every menacing and capricious form, strangely overlean the Elbe, and seem to tell of some such miracle performed in the days of "the good people" as was wrought by him who

. . . . "cleft Eildon hills in three."

I gazed wistfully at the cabinets where the poet and musician had carried on their alchemy; but more, I confess, to possess myself of a distinct impression of their aspect, than with that intense enthusiasm some enjoy on all due occasions: — happy in having feelings like chimes, which cannot fail to answer to the touch, whosoever hand it be that puts down the key. Yet it was impossible, even then and there, not to be alive to the influences which such a picturesquely-placed habitation might have exercised over one whom I have always fancied to have been largely acted upon by the sights and sounds of Nature. In another point of view, however, on regarding them from a distance, the environs of Dresden seem to me less friendly

to the genius of Weber. Not far from his summer residence is Pillnitz — the country palace of the Kings of Saxony. I only looked towards it that morning as towards a building of the heaviest possible architecture; the work of some German Vanbrugh. Had I known as much as I have since done, it might not have been the least suggestive station of my Elbe pilgrimage.

In that dull and grand-looking mansion was preserved, in the composer's time, and, for aught I know, to this day, a rag of feudalism, to speak metaphorically,— one of the old condescensions of Royalty, by which the earthenware was allowed to approach the porcelain of society, and cloth of frieze to become acquainted with the splendours of cloth of gold. The rulers of Saxony dined in public, and dined at two o'clock. More than one friend has graphically described to me the primitive and old-world figures that feasted the eyes of those admitted to the balcony, whence common men might learn what and how their rulers eat. There came homely old princes, with white hair, and breeches

like Sir C—— W——'s which never knew what braces meant;—a watch in each fob (in the exploded *macaroni* fashion), and long, long *queues*, those simplest of all symbols of etiquette. There might be seen stately and substantial ladies, decorated in all the German *grandezza* which so amused Bettina when Goethe's mother dressed herself to receive Madame de Stäel. There might be smelt the miscellaneously arranged odours of things savoury and things sweet which distinguish a German dinner. There might be heard (O shame to a music-loving family* like the Royalties of Saxony !), among

* One of the pleasantest passages in Dr. Burney's "Musical Tour in Germany" describes the visit he paid Nymphenburg (a palace three miles from Munich), where he was presented to the Electress Dowager of Saxony, whose opera of "Talestri" was then on the point of being performed at the Bavarian Court. Her brother, the Elector, too, was a fair player on the *viol da gamba*. And the Doctor speaks in high strains of his performance, as well as of the style of the Dowager's singing, which had been taught her by Porpora. After an evening spent in the interchange of musical conversation, when his Highness and the court supped in the same great hall and public manner in which they had dined, "I went," says

the noises of knives and forks, and the bustling of perspiring servitors, the tinkle of a pianoforte, or the screech of an Italian air, sung by some well-worn *cantatrice*, who had been lured from the macaroni and polenta of her own land to become a fixture at the court of Saxony. And those who looked to see who the pianist might be (compelled, poor soul! into a full court dress for the occasion) must have turned away, wondering at the odd forms taken by the much-vaunted patronage of Music in Germany, — especially if they were gifted with the spirit of prophecy, and had already picked up the conviction that a new and brilliant genius was abroad in the person of Carl Maria von Weber!

Burney, "with Guadagni and the rest of the principal performers, to make my court during the supper. * * * The lords in waiting offered us refreshments, and the Elector condescended to ask Guadagni if he gave a supper to the Englishman and his other company; meaning Panzachi, Rauzzini, and Naumann: he answered, that he should give us bread and cheese and a glass of wine. 'Here,' cried the Elector, emptying two dishes of game on a plate, 'send that to your apartments.'"

I confess, whenever I reflect upon such an appropriation of the services of Genius as this, — when I think of the "Concert-Stück" destroyed by the stirring of a salad, or the exquisite Sonata in A flat, Op. 39., being lost in the midst of the discussion of those mighty puddings in which a German cook excels, — the corruption of Radicalism rises strong within me. I verily believe, had I known the nature of the duty which the position of Weber at Dresden demanded from him, while I was in the full glow of enthusiasm consequent on the enjoyment of "Euryanthe," I must have shaken the dust of Pillnitz from my feet, with something of a bitter and disdainful feeling, instead of turning round and admiring the fine but heavy composition (to use the painter's jargon) it made between two magnificently embrowned chestnut trees, ere a sudden bend in the road to Löhmen hid it from my sight.

CHAP. II.

ORGAN-PLAYING. — 1840.

Characteristics of the Organ. — Visit to Herr Schneider. — Inaccessibility of the Dresden Houses. — "In the body and out of the body." — The Sophien-Kirche. — Its Interior. — The Organ by Silbermann. — Its Sweetness of Tone. — Herr Schneider's Performance. — Bach's Fugues. — Improvisation. — Moral of the Instrument. — Sunday Morning Service. — *Corales*. — Admirable Accompaniment. — Henry Isak. — Catholic Church. — Cremona Violins. — Another Silbermann Organ. — Flatness of Diapason. — Morlacchi's Music. — Picturesque Group. — Artificial *Soprani*. — A Sabbath Thought in Dresden.

I LIKED Dresden even better on my second than on my first visit. The weather was brighter, — the town seemed more tranquilly engaging; and the pictures in the Gallery had taken the look of old familiar friends. Dresden, too, is doomed to be a place of musical compensation for failures and disappointments encountered elsewhere. The repayment for Berlin shortcomings, which, in 1839, I found in my first introduction to "Euryanthe," took, in 1840, a form more precious — if that could be — because more unique, by bringing me acquainted

with the consummate organ-playing of Herr Schneider.

I will not libel any musician by asking him if he be fond of the instrument. The further removed he be from personality in his preferences of Art — the more devotedly addicted to Thought in its noblest, if not most excursive, flights, — the more exquisitely will he relish, the more eagerly return to those grave and sublime pleasures — to those oracular utterances, as it were, in which musical Truth and Poetry, of the highest order, make themselves known. After a London season of fever and competition and excitement, when the newest wonder-player has been hardly heard before he has been pushed off his stool of popularity by the newest singer, — when one strain of music has been hurried out of the memory by some other of a more seizing piquancy, — to find in the midst of the comparative quiet of a German town, and the yet more modest tranquillity of an occupied but not a dazzling career, an instrumentalist who, in his way, might challenge the Liszts and the Paganinis of his

century, — was as great a gratification to the mind as his artistic exhibitions were a delight to the ear. And to me the gratification was doubled, inasmuch as it came by way of sequel to the traces of Bach I had been exploring at Leipsic.

The weariness which the paltry "Die Beiden Schützen" of Lortzing, at the Opera House, had left upon my spirits, was only half effaced by a long morning among the Venetian pictures in the Gallery: when, as I was sitting at dinner, on a certain Saturday, a promised note of introduction was handed to me, which privileged me to present myself at Herr Schneider's door. By the way, this simple ceremony is by no means so easily to be performed at Dresden as elsewhere. In no town that I have ever visited is it so difficult to find out your acquaintances. Bells are scarce; doorplates, as far as I could see, utterly unknown. The first floor knoweth nothing of the cunning of the second — especially when the latter is inquired for in bad English-German; and in every house I approached, — to judge from the silence

and impenetrability and difficulty of access which prevailed, — the inhabitants might, one and all, have been suffering under an epidemic dun-*phobia*. To the third story, however, of the mansion where Herr Schneider carries on his own studies and directs those of others, I was guided by the full chord of many voices; and, for the one only time in Dresden, I found him whom I came to seek without that running to and fro, and that hesitation of servants, which take so much of its edge off the pleasure of a first visit.

I remember a story of a Swedenborgian who, on meeting a stranger, suddenly exclaimed, "I have seen you before, but whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell." This address I could have echoed on presenting my credentials to Herr Schneider. I had seen him "out of the body" years ago, during the whole time when I was occupying myself in tracing the imagined character of a German organist, in a forgotten book; — and his simple and hearty welcome, and his homely and intelligent features, on which a smile sits more at its ease than on many countenances far more regularly agreeable, —

in short, the appearance, air, and *abord* (as the French say) of the man, had the welcome familiarity of old acquaintanceship. It was late in the day when I paid my visit; and he had been occupied among his musical avocations since the lark's hour of rising. But when I told him how short the duration of my stay in Dresden must be; he sent for the keys of the church and the bellows-blower, as if he was doing the most natural thing instead of the greatest favour imaginable,—without any superfluous words between us. Indeed, profuse thanks would have suited ill with his hearty plainness of manner. And we were out of the house, and on the road to one of the rarest musical pleasures I ever enjoyed, as if we had known one another "in the body" for years, within ten minutes of his breaking the seal of ———'s friendly letter.

The Sophien-Kirche, or Evangelical Church, which we reached after passing down two or three of the dark and narrow streets in which Dresden abounds, is one of those bleak and melancholy Lutheran buildings where the destroyer and the image-breaker have left their

visible traces. It once belonged to a Franciscan convent; and a superbly enriched portal, opening upon the Kloster Platz, remains to tell what the rest of the building has been. Its interior aspect is yet more fragmentary, and clearly indicative of sack and plunder. The church is supported by a double row of columns, with a large and irregular gallery stretching round one half of it. The vault and pillars are debased by parsimonious whitewash: a few birdcage-like pews are hung up and down on its high walls: it has a few quaint old pictures, a mouldering monument or so, surmounted by a crucifix; and the same papistical symbol above the dingy *rococo* of the high altar. The fading of daylight gave these objects that sad and sombre hue which Time has imparted to more than one picture, where a like assemblage has been combined by Weenix or some other such painter of interiors. There was something, too, in the reverberation of our feet, as we went up the gallery stairs, which said more to my fancy than it would be at all discreet to print. The best got-up scene could not have been made so ap-

propriate for the music of meditation — which organ-music is.

Herr Schneider's instrument stands in a corner of the gallery, clad in a white case with silvered pipes, and decked out with a quantity of *rococo* gilt garlands. It has only two key-boards, each four octaves and a half, in visible register; thirty-four stops; and a long pedal-board, nearly as well worn as St. Peter's toe in the Vatican. The voice proceeding from the first handful of keys put down, informed me of the neighbourhood of something surpassing after its kind. This is one of the great Silbermann's organs; and never heard I pipes of such a ripe and fascinating sweetness of tone, from the lowest *elephant* pedal C to the *skylark* C *altissimo;* — no hissing, no wheezing, no lumbering, no growling, — none of that ferocity of sound which makes some of our famous English specimens surgical to the ear. Compared, indeed, with aught in modern organ-building, the Silbermann instruments, at Dresden, are what the sumptuous ruby glass of the Middle Ages is to the ripest-

red piece of new Bohemian manufacture. Only a few weeks before I had been listening to our own noble organs at Christchurch in London, and in the Town-hall at Birmingham. A few weeks afterwards I was admiring a magnificent musical structure in progress of erection in the Westminster Abbey of the French — the cathedral at St. Denis. So that I was not without some opportunity of comparison, to warrant me in simile-making: and it is to be remembered that, as regards tone, the difference between player and player is little to be felt in the case of the instrument in question.

But in all that regards hand, and foot, and mind, — firmness of the first, brilliancy of the second, and concentration of the third, — Herr Schneider is to me as unrivalled as his organ. Drawing out a dear shabby old book from his depository, he asked me to choose which of Bach's grand fugues he was to play me; and, almost ere I could mention those with which I was most familiar, had begun to add to my treasure by opening one, in B minor, I had never heard before. I have been warned, again and again,

during the progress of transcribing these pages, that a written account of musical execution is likely to be as barren of fruit as the dancing lessons which the country school-mistress directed from a book with mathematical diagrams; but I must, once again, disregard the warning, as far as insisting upon the union of power and quietness which characterised Herr Schneider's performance. Those who treat organ-playing as "a black business," to which they bend themselves with frowning brows, and coat-sleeves turned up half-way to the shoulders,—the school of kickers, and swingers to and fro, who make much exertion cover up very little skill,—might have taken a lesson from this admirable artist, whose hands, as they glided away over the keys ("*worked away*" is the established phrase), were bringing out into their fullest glory all those magnificent chains of sound,—all those replies, and suspenses, and accumulations, which, with a calm but never-tiring munificence, the noble old Cantor of the Thomas-Schule has lavished in his compositions. Perhaps a finer specimen of these does not exist than in the fugue in

E minor, with which Herr Schneider next indulged me; where the subject,

spreading in form like a wedge, offers such excellent scope for the amplification of science and the arrangement of climax. I withdrew to the further corner of the gallery, where twilight was now fast sinking; and, while listening to this marvellous performance, lost the personality both of composer and the performer, more completely, perhaps, than I have ever done. It was neither Bach nor Schneider: the building was filled, to running over, with august and stately Music; and the old childish feeling of mystery and delight which, in the days when I was sparingly admitted to the acquaintanceship of any instrument whatsoever, the gigantic sounds of the organ used to awaken in me, came back as if I had been only —— years old.

After one or two more glorious displays of entire mastery over the key and pedal-board,— "It is too dark for us to see any more of Bach,"

said my liberal host; "so you must excuse what I am going to do:" and, with that, struck off at once into an improvisation of rare beauty of figure, and affluence of device. The subject was not at all a recondite one; — simple and bold, and at first I fancied a little drily treated: what, indeed, is there that would not sound so after the unfoldings of Bach? But, whether the admirable artist was excited by the keen relish I showed, or whether it is the nature of such powers as his to sustain and to excite themselves,—as he went on, the depth of his science was surpassed by the brilliancy of his fancy. It was the work of one hand to draw and close the stops which were wanted by the play of his imagination: a matter, of course, in which he could receive no help. But he ministered to himself with such a wonderful promptness and agility of finger, that the changes of hand from the key-board to the register were never felt; while so subtly were they combined and alternated, as to be totally clear of producing that piecemeal effect in which the fantasy-work of common organists so often ends, from a want of

a like judgment in combination. Till then, the remarkable mental energy demanded for an exhibition like this never struck me in all its fulness. And yet, not only must the performer originate thoughts, but, by new and happily-successive admixtures, contrive effects totally, of course, beyond the reach of him who has only before him the plain and immovable keys of a piano-forte. Taken merely in its most matter-of-fact sense, as a display which proved nothing, here were memory, combination, promptitude, invention, and mechanical skill, united. I may be laughed at, but I could not help imagining that the exercise of a power at once implying thought, self-mastery, and a patient use of physical strength, could hardly have been carried to so high a perfection without its favourable moral influences; and that if it were so, herein, and not from their being erected in churches, might lie the superior sacredness of organs beyond other instruments — herein the holiness of the performance of the music written for them. By the time that Herr Schneider had brought his improvisation to a close, I could

hardly distinguish either himself or organ from among the mass of gloomy shadows that had fallen round me; and I left the church in that pleasantly thoughtful state which suits so well with Dresden, and in which there is rest and not excitement. Lights were gleaming up and down in the windows of the high houses surrounding the Neumarkt: here and there a solitary foot-fall was to be heard, the sounds of daily traffic being for the most part over.

At nine precisely on the following morning I was again at Herr Schneider's elbow, in the organ-loft of the Sophien-Kirche, anxious to bear him company through the services of the morning. He had warned me that the plain forms of Lutheran worship forbade his exercising his craft with any thing like fantasy; but I would not have exchanged what I did hear for the most elaborate performance which hands and feet in concord could have completed. Before the service commenced to an ample congregation, he treated us to a brief prelude on the full organ, of great majesty and brilliancy, as clear in design and as symmetrical in

elaboration as though it were an *impromptu fait à loisir*. Then, while accompanying the psalms — five or six of which were most admirably sung by a choir of eighteen boys and young men — the extent of resource brought by him to bear on a prosaic and inferior task (as a second-rate player might choose to esteem it) was to me little less astonishing than the force he had shown in mastering the difficulties of Bach. The interludes between the verses were substantially and solidly dignified, yet sufficiently rich in ideas to set up for a twelvemonth some of the renowned improvisers I have heard; while the artful and unexpected management of the stops, so as to produce every variety of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, entirely precluded the occupation of the swell. Though I stood close by, I was unable, from a want of familiarity with the manipulations of the instrument, and the rapidity with which the changes were executed, to take any note of the successions and mixtures of stops employed. *Receipts* in such a matter are of little use to the half-taught, and none to the full-grown, artist.

Between the *corales*, which, thus sung and thus accompanied, I would fain have crystallised for the benefit of all English choirs (could the miracle of the tunes frozen in Munchausen's horn be repeated), I confess myself to have been busier in turning over the venerable and well-thumbed music-books, and gathering what I could from their pages, than in trying to translate the drowsy and not very clear accents of the *pfarrer* into a service I could follow. There is much to be said some future day about these German psalm-tunes: a store of pleasant anecdote belongs to them. One of the most beautiful, for instance, that I heard that morning — Nun ruhen alle Wälder — had been in its early days as secular a melody as "Rousseau's Dream." It was the composition (so M. Mainzer had informed me in his amusing "Esquisses Musicales") of the famous Henry Isak, on the occasion of his being summoned from Inspruck to Munich three hundred years ago — a farewell tune, which got into every German mouth, and was seized hold of by the Reformers, on Rowland Hill's principles of turning profane

music to good account. Harmonised, and finely sung by many voices, as I heard it, it seemed unfit for any service save that of the Temple. Other of the tunes were by Herman, Pretorius, Crüger, Dr. Martin Luther himself; and in many antiphonal parts of the service the Ambrosian and Gregorian chaunts seemed to have been retained, as well as the popish crucifix and candles on the altar.

Without any levity intended, the traveller may be of all musical religions in Dresden without the slightest discomfort; for the order of divine worship admits of his participating in the Catholic services at the Court church after the Lutheran church has poured out its congregation. The two buildings stand as near to each other as their spirit is widely apart. Each, however, has its Silbermann organ. There is a third in the Frauen-Kirche (the most theatrical-looking church I ever entered), which I did not hear, the Catholic instrument being reputed as the finest. The musical services in which it bears a part have high repute among the tourists. I had been told to listen to some

Cremona violins in the orchestra, of a singular perfection of tone: I had been warned, too, that the choir contained a pair of those happily obsolete curiosities which were the consequence of the Romish prohibition of female assistance in the service of the Mass. The Catholic church, though its interior has a somewhat waste air from the absence of gilding and pictorial ornament, is a spacious and handsome edifice. The nave was crowded with the congregation — the men on the one side, on the other the women. Some of the royal family were to be seen from their tribune overlooking the altar: and there were the tinkling bells, and the incense-clouds, and the gorgeously-clad priests, — which, I am free to confess, in place of offending me as the "mummery" which stern Protestant travellers seem to think it a point of conscience to account them, never fail to quicken my papistical sympathies by striking the imagination, without, I would fain hope, spoiling the heart. But the reverberation in the building is so great, that the organ, though most cleverly played by Herr Klengel, and a thorough Silbermann in

its silver-sweet tones, did not assert its superiority over its kinsman I had just been hearing. The sweetness, again, of the Cremona violins, led by Lipinski (who ranks high, as we Londoners know), was largely impaired to my ear by the flatness of their pitch, which, a twelvemonth before, had tempted me to believe in the rejuvenescence of Madame Schröder Devrient's

The tone of the orchestra sounded mawkish, independently of the intrinsic savourlessness of the Mass which it was performing — a *fade* composition by Morlacchi. What a sickly contrast to those stout old Lutheran tunes! As we were going up to the music gallery, a child with long German hair, and in a dark palmer-like cloak, came up to my kind *cicerone*, and, putting its little hand in his, trotted on by his side a little way: — precisely the figure which the neo-Catholic painters dress in a surplice, and arm with a branch of lilies, in some sacred picture: precisely the figure, too, to

set off my honest and kind-hearted conductor; and as the sun fell upon them through a window-slit, as they were mounting the massive greystone staircase to the music gallery, I thought I had never seen a more engaging picture. The little door was thrown open which was to admit me to a place among the fiddles and drums. While my foot was as yet on the threshold, out came a long-drawn sound — parcel squeak, parcel warble — which had well nigh driven me back with disgust at its shrillness and its falsity, — and shock at its disproportion to the six-feet-high and substantial tenement whence it issued. In its days of perfection, however, I could have fancied it possessed that subtle union of piercing and oily tone which distinguishes an oboe; and, bad as it was, — and bad as was the second *soprano*, of like quality, which went along with it, — I could readily conceive that there might lie in its use peculiarities of effect which can be produced by no other vocal organs. But even this conviction, honestly stated in despite of antipathy, could not reconcile me to the far-famed

music of the Catholic church in Dresden. There is decrepitude in it: the feebleness of old age without its venerable aspect. An instrumental symphony performed in one portion of the service was little newer in its forms than if Hullmandel or Graun had devised it. Somehow or other, the Italian style, whether in composition or performance—in church or opera—becomes to me intolerable in Germany. And, in spite of the report of tourist upon tourist, and enthusiast after enthusiast, I cannot invite any lover of what is genuine or individual to attend High Mass with the hope of finding his reverential feelings quickened by the offerings of Art.

He had better, if he would keep the devout feelings which the massive congregational singing in the Evangelical Church is calculated to inspire, give himself up to an hour of silent meditation before the Madonna di San Sisto in the gallery:— at least, I know that her holy and spiritual smile bore me company along my favourite walk on the Brühl Terrace, in the quiet half hour which elapsed between my gratefully

shaking hands and parting with Herr Schneider, and my joining the mid-day table.

THE MADONNA DI SAN SISTO.

A SABBATH THOUGHT IN DRESDEN.

Couldst thou, O man! with thine own will, uprear
  Thyself so nigh Divinity? thus show
  The mysteries of the heavens? — or didst thou bow
To Power invisible, with child-like fear
Submitting hand and heart? — It was so. Here
  Is God, not man! yon forms angelic glow
  With His own radiant spirit. — Art is slow,
Fruitless, and cold, by this unblest. Draw near
  And worship, then, my soul! — 'tis holy ground,
Nor thou idolatrous. The King of kings,
Who folds Eternity beneath his wings,
  Yet doth with love his smallest child surround,
  Is here, too, manifest, with glory crown'd,
And calls on thee for praise, through fading human things!

October 25. 1840.

NOTES

ON

NUREMBURG.

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Frankfort to Nuremburg.— Fellow Travellers.— A young Actress. — Her Airs and Graces. — Dettingen. — Aschaffenburg. — Autumn in the Forest of Spessart.— The Conquest achieved. — Victor Hugo and French Rhythms. — Midnight at Wurzburg. — Breakfast at Emskirchen. — Wretched Inn. — Nuremburg. — First Impressions.— The Bayerische-Hof. — A Family House and its Motto. — Church of St. Lawrence. — Its Treasures of Art. — Relics of Catholicism. — Ancestral Pride. — The Frauen-Kirche. — The Burg. — The Joannes Kirch-hof. — Martin Ketzel's Seven Stations. — Stately Burial Ground. — The Tombs. — Walk home. — Nuremburg Theatre. — Scraps of Musical Anecdotage.—Paulmann.—The Gerls.— Meuschel.— Denner. — Modern Music discordant in Nuremburg.— Church of St. Sebald.— Rauch's Statue of Albert Durer. — Peter Visscher's Shrine of St. Sebald. — Votive Picture. — The Tucher Light. — Endowments. — The Moritz Kapelle.— The Rath-haus.— The Dole.—Group of old Men.— Münzer's Picture.— The Council Chamber.— Portraits of the Patricians. — Organ Music. —

Walk through the Town. — A Peep at the Munich Opera. — The Reformation Fest. — Sunday in St. Sebald's. — Picturesque Congregation. — The *Corale*. — Lutheran Music in a Roman Catholic Temple. — Departure.

ENTIRELY frustrated in my purposes of reaching Paris by a certain day, and finding myself at Frankfort — of all German towns the least engaging, because, serving only as a portal to better things beyond, it possesses few attractions of its own (Dannecker's "Ariadne" always remembered) — I know not what better I could have done, with three days to spare, than fulfil a long-cherished desire, and take a look at that gem among the old cities of Germany — Nuremburg.

We were four in the body of the schnellpost. The *coupé* was occupied by a substantial burgher, with his placket at his side, and his pipe for ever at his mouth; and a woman of many bundles, pillows, and baskets,— one of those good travellers whom it is a despair to encounter when the vehicle is narrow. My companions were, at all events, less ponderous: a demoiselle, escorted to the Post by a gentle-

man and lady, whose kissings and leave-takings outnumbered all that I ever witnessed in that land of kissing and leave-taking;—an old woman, whose wrinkled features, and grey hair combed back beneath a brown bonnet with a few scraps of pale canary-coloured ribbon to garnish it, made a better Denner than any of the pictures by that microscopic master in the Dresden Gallery;—and a very handsome boy, fresh from Bonn, whose finely-turned throat, and thick waving hair, and deep eyes, and well-cut lips might have been *studied* to good advantage by any one wanting a head of Hylas. His long pipe, and his nondescript walking-stick, and his violin case, were all arranged; and we were at last fairly on the road, jingling down the fine poplar avenue which leads to the clean and pleasant town of Hanau.

I have not oftener been more amused than with my *vis-à-vis* — the young lady. It was impossible to be long in doubt as to her vocation. Talking as much by the sprightly pantomime of her hands as by her sprightly tongue, — very pretty, but rather haggard, — her neatly kept

ringlets ready for any emergency, — I should, in any case, have recognised her as theatrical, had not names and hearty farewell messages, uttered in the midst of that volley of salutes and embraces snatched by and from her, put her connexion with the profession past doubt. Never was any one on better terms with herself and her bonnet. The latter, a splendid construction of blue plush, and quite new, was notable enough to have played a part in the capital bargaining duet between the American girls which was overheard and reported by Captain Marryat. And its owner took it off, told what it cost, caressed its bows, and smoothed its strings, with a pride of possession, one half, at least, of which was artless. Before we had travelled ten minutes, she had made friends with every one — even the Denner, who was propitiated, by the offering of a pear, to overlook her airs and graces with a motherly forbearance and a wintry smile. For myself, though engaged over Victor Hugo's "Les Rayons et les Ombres," having just stumbled upon his "*Guitarre*" —

"Gastilbelza, l'homme à la carabine,
Chantait ainsi,"—

which got hold of me, with all the strong charm of a vivid simple ballad, — it was impossible not to be distracted by my neighbour's "varieties." These, as Master Mace says of the changes of the old harpsichord he wished to sell, were "exceeding pleasant." Her mind was set upon subduing the youth who sat by me. It was a very arduous task. Not that the boy was too bashful, or too innocent, or too silent, or too rude; — I have rarely travelled with a better-nurtured or more intelligent companion. Neither was he preoccupied by any one else: — he had no braided *beitel* for his tobacco — no hair-ring on the fore-finger which does such hard and foul service in the pipes of Young Germany — he was perfectly willing to contribute his share of conversation to reciprocate pleasantries, but in a quiet, sensible, cousinly way. That was not what she wanted. First, as I have said, having taken off her notable plush bonnet, she arranged her hair curl by curl, he looking on — an operation which elicited

no warmer response on his part than a calculation of the probable length of our ride, followed by the eternal permission asked to smoke a cigar. "Certainly;—she was fond of tobacco—she preferred it to any perfumes — would he let her see what sort he smoked?" "*Gewiss*," was his calm reply, and the contents of the cigar-case were tumbled out on her lap. Then she began, with gesture conformable, to narrate all manner of *piquant* stories about herself and her journeys, and the pleasant company it had always been her good hap to find; — shaking the Denner woman's hand, that she might not feel herself omitted in the compliment. To this the youth (was ever Cymon so inapprehensive?) replied by mutual confidences, — talked to her of his elder brother, and his uncle!! That was a hopeless bait, obviously. Presently, she thought fit to go to sleep, arranging one little round cheek on her pretty hand, so that the other should be lightly shaded by her shining hair, in the perfection of that attitude so often attempted upon the green sofa which the liveried myrmidons of the Stage wheel in to all manner of rural scenes

for heroines and other sentimental persons to slumber upon. I am ashamed of my sex when I have to say that, in reply to this bewitching measure, Hylas fairly followed her example, and fell, in very audible truth, asleep! In another moment her eyes were as wide open and as wakeful as a bird's. I gave up the game for lost, though I might have known the universal woman and the German man better.

These schemes and stratagems consumed the best part of the journey betwixt Hanau and Aschaffenburg. To reach the latter, a wide plain and a wretched village are to be passed—the plain and the village of Dettingen. Perhaps some lovers of music will understand me when I say, that, entering the latter, I felt a momentary twinge of disappointment, as if the post-horn of the *schwager*, instead of its eternal ditty, could, indeed, have been expected to give out those simple but most pompous trumpet notes by which Handel, in the opening of his grandest "Te Deum," has given the place a "local habitation and a name" to many a *fanatico* who never knew the names of the commanders of

the Allies and of the French in the victory of 1743, — or what they fought about! I had not been prepared for the picturesque appearance of Aschaffenburg, which lies pleasantly along and above the Main; — in its aspect the most southern place I have yet seen, with its rich and fantastic palace flanked by four picturesque square towers, and its crops of maize hanging against the walls to dry. The sun — a rare guest for the last six weeks — was out, so that the fair landscape which surrounds the town could not have been seen to better advantage. The stages on immediately quitting it are yet more striking. There are hamlets nestling low down in the valley on the right of the road, every one of which, with its red-roofed houses hidden among fruit-trees, makes its own picture; while the companies of women who sate, gossipping and beating flax by the road side, however ugly, were anything but despicable as foreground figures. There was an autumn glory of crimson and orange and pale gold upon the woods of the forest of Spessart, which an American wilderness in an Indian summer could

hardly have exceeded. The air was diamond-clear, and perfectly silent—save when the echoes were startled by the violent and sonorous reports of the postilion's whip, as he urged his horses up the long hills.

It was delightful to emancipate one's self from the fusty atmosphere of the schnellpost, by no means the better for the odours of tobacco and of strong food: and a steep ascent gave us half an hour's walk. During this, the maiden of the plush-bonnet did her best to create a movement in her favour, by feigning pretty fears of banditti and gipsies in so lonely a place, and by uttering many appeals to the gallantry of the young student, "who, she hoped, should any adventure happen, would take care of her." But he assured her she need not be afraid: his uncle came that road four times a year, and had never met any one:—they were all good simple people in those parts. Fairly worn out by such a perverse obduracy, she turned to me, and was presently chattering as gaily about the theatrical gossip of Munich, her native town, — about Madame Mink, and

Kapellmeister Lachner, and *Solo-tanzerinn* this, and her dear friend *Schauspielerinn* the other — and kind King Louis above all,—as if her steadfast design had been utterly relinquished. It was not so, however. The air of the Spessart is keen; and the road-side *stube* at Aschaffenburg, into which we had been invited for refection by a dirty toad-complexioned old crone, had promised "eye of newt and toe of frog," rather than good coffee or clean bread. None of us durst partake of these refreshments, so that the party were by this time all rather hungry. On remounting the vehicle, a general rummage for eatables began. The maiden dived into a huge tapestry-wrought sack of miscellanies, which might have victualled the Ark for a day: Hylas meanwhile drawing upon his pocket for a more modest packet of cold meat and bread, which had kept his cigars close and loving company. Not a moment was to be lost. With a smile of welcome and good-will not to be resisted, she produced a couple of huge sandwiches, filled with most savoury *wurst*. The boy's eyes glistened as she merrily thrust them

into his hands, with a promise of more when they were despatched. In another instant his mouth was full. The ice was fairly broken for ever! All the rest of the journey, he paid suit and service to the full heart's content of his admirer; and the last glimpse I had of the pair was their disappearance into The Strauss at Nuremburg, — the youth with reverent care carrying the basket which had produced a result so long denied and so desirable.

It was well that I had Victor Hugo's volume to fall back upon, and bethought myself of trying that method of improving time recommended by Lintot to Pope when the two rode together to Oxford. The "*Guitarre*," as the great French author somewhat affectedly calls his Spanish ballad of the "homme à la carabine," had so possessed my fancy, that, as night fell, a set of English rhymes began to arrange themselves in my mind, in imitation of the original. Till I made this first essay at paraphrasing French verses, the peculiarities of the national rhythm had never been sufficiently taken into account in considering the charac-

teristics of French music. The intractable and inharmonious structure of the language, poetically considered, had never enough suggested itself as the cause of those rigorous cadences, those forced recurrences, and dislocations of accent, — those prolongations of the feminine termination, so indispensable to the production of metrical forms, and which have given the music of the country so pervading and constant a feature. It is because of these — overlooking the *thought* which is independent of all forms (else how could Opera exist at all?) — that so many one-sided persons have despised the composers of France as little better than a set of manufacturers of mere dance tunes — that others, again, have seen in the resonant grandeur of Corneille's high-souled tragedy nothing more than the sounding of brass and the tinkling of a cymbal. It would be just as reasonable to deny La Grande Nation wit, because something of its piquant *tournure* of phrase, admired and envied by all who can appreciate repartee, may be ascribable to a language which, keen, pointed, and destitute of fluency,

calls for no ordinary share of selection and science in its arrangement. At least, they will not doubt how far the fatal sweetness of the Italian tongue has tended to the dilution of sense in its rhymes, and, consequently, meaning in its melodies. Example succeeded example, and *romance* and *canzone* became confused with the half-formed English and half-remembered French lines, till all clearness and coherence of speculation were lost, and I was fain to adjourn a cause not sufficiently studied by those who write upon and those who write for Music till another day. How long I had slept on this interesting question it would be hard to tell. My last waking remembrance was the crossing of the ferry at Lengfurth, with the lights of the village twinkling in the Main, and that murmuring sound of a weir which is so lulling when all is dark. It was midnight when I was wakened up, on our entering Wurzburg, by the hollow sound of the wheels, as they wound between the high walls of the houses and rolled over the bridge. At such a dead hour, and to one in the feverish half-surprised state which succeeds

rest uneasily taken and capriciously broken, the guardians of that bridge — a double row of tall saints, robed in ample floating drapery, and each statue holding a lighted lamp — impressed me to a degree hard to describe. It may be a foolish fancy, but I shall always think of Wurzburg as a place whose issues are in holy keeping. A concert of deep and sonorous chimes was tolling twelve — not a solitary creature was abroad in the streets — not a stray candle lighting up the face of one of the gaunt shadowy buildings. The very post-house yard seemed cavernous and deserted. There is always something striking and "eerie" (we have no English word to express it) in thus entering a town at such an hour; but I never felt the spell of time and place so impressive as at Wurzburg, and should be almost loth to break it by the familiarity of daylight acquaintance.

But the imposing and the absurd are rarely far asunder; nor could the most resolute dreamer of Midnight Conclaves and Secret Tribunals have resisted the scene which took place after the tardy and comfortless supper served at the inn hard by for the occupants of the

schnellpost. The meal had given me an opportunity to take note of the lady of the *coupè*, who proved subsequently to be a Vienna milliner, on her way from Paris with the newest modes for Princess Schwartzenberg, and Princess Wasa, and others of the *créme*. A more thorough compound of animal luxury, professional pomposity, and knowing management, never set forth on a journey — nor one much less pleasing in aspect. Eyes tender if not sore, a blue beard on her upper lip, and cheeks not guiltless of rouge, made up the principal features of the picture. She was weary of the company of the *herr* with the placket; and, as the *frau* Denner had left us at Esselbach, proposed to succeed to her corner in the *interieur*. The little actress, Hylas, and myself, had mounted back to our places, and were already half asleep, when she bustled in with her legion of comforts. None but a German *conducteur* would have had patience with the trouble she gave in their arrangement. At length, the good man had lit his pipe, and was preparing with a grunt to mount his perch, when once more called by her: —

"Well, what more this time, madam?"

"I want a stone to put my feet upon. Bring me a large stone: my legs are so short, that they dangle and will not touch the ground. It is very disagreeable."

It was not only the request, but the tone in which it was spoken; — neither Dejazet nor Mrs. Orger have any note half so inimitable in their voices!

The only further halt of any consequence, betwixt Frankfort and Nuremburg, is made in the morning, where a wretched cup of coffee is given to those who choose to drink it, at Emskirchen, in a village tavern, dirty, and (a rarity in Germany) most uncivilly served. I noticed there an array of old clock-work curiosities, in dingy glass cases, hanging against the walls — and a miserable spinet in the *stube*, so small and ancient, that, but for its spider legs, I could have fancied it the identical instrument found by a party of English at the monastery of Mount St. Bernard; which was propped up on cushions, and thus curtseyed to every chord of the player. The Bavarian

villages, Langenzenn, Possenheim (where we stopped on returning), &c., are more miserable, more Irish-looking, than any thing I have seen elsewhere in Germany: and one might be excused a fair amount of impatience to have done with them and arrive at our destination. I was almost afraid — recollecting that I had been disappointed by the far-famed towns of Belgium, and having been wound up by circumstances to a pitch of anticipation utterly unwise. We were at Nuremburg at noon, in four and twenty hours after quitting Frankfort.

And for a moment I was disappointed, when the cessation of the columnar avenue of poplars made me aware that we were approaching the town — as if I could have expected the master-works of Durer and Krafft and Visscher to meet me without the walls and the fosse. Thus, I am persuaded, by not taking the trouble to think, do nine tenths of travellers provide vexation for themselves. But the two grey-brown vigorous towers of the gate reassured me, and as we jingled under the archway we caught a glimpse of a case of "*hour-eggs*," hung against

the wall, to be disposed of, for aught I knew, in the primitive fashion of Davie Ramsay's watches. As we advanced further, perspectives and vistas, each more irregularly rich in its ornament than the last, disclosed themselves; and I felt sure that all was right, and that I really was in what some one or other has expressively called "the Venice of Germany."

Now, the difficulty seems to be how to put a rein upon my pen. The greater number of the high steep-gabled houses have patron saints and virgins, standing in all the freshness of recent veneration, under elaborate and fantastic canopies, or else bower-windows, corner turrets, and battlements — or balconies hanging over the Pegnitz. Then there are the two noble churches commanding the two divisions of the town. The stream which forms these is spanned by painters' bridges, each claimable as such from its irregular and ancient form, or the accumulation of objects round it; and each, by its characteristic name, as the Carlsbrücke, the Fleischbrücke, suggesting its own associations. In short, my eye never received so much in the same space

of time as during the walk from the post-house to the Bayersche Hof. That excellent hotel was, when reached, in itself a picture. Outwardly, it is a spacious irregular building, with a water front overhung by balconies worth the pains of a Prout or a Harding: inwardly, an edifice of court within court; one wall diversified by the pierced balustrade of a rich angular staircase; — another animated by this inscription —

VERITATI, VIRTUTI, SAPIENTIÆ, MUSIQUE, EREXIT
HOC TEMPLUM, ARTIUM ESTIMATOR, OPTIMUM, SUÆ PATRIÆ
OPTANS
Aurnheimer.
MDCCCI.

It is an Aurnheimer who still dispenses to the traveller the comforts which his family-house affords, with a manly good-nature and courtesy which it was not unnatural in part to ascribe to the consciousness of his good old name.

The short time I could devote to Nuremburg made a cicerone indispensable. At two o'clock my *lohndiener* made his appearance, and, though a trifle stupid after my night-journey and a

heavy dinner, I turned out full of expectation; —first to the church of St. Laurence. Crossing the bridge, and mounting the ridge on which one half of Nuremburg stands, I passed mansions and streets and openings, each richer than the last. The very pent-houses, where the rope and pulley of the merchant used to hang in the days of the city's prosperity, are wreathed with garlands and foliage borders. There is hardly a wall which has not *blossomed out* into oriels — hardly a battlement which has not shot up into pinnacled turrets. But the climax is reached in the mansion of the Duke of Nassau, close opposite the church whither I was bound. This has a florid battlement, and an oriel worth travelling to Nuremburg to draw. I thought I should never get into the church, so much its outer features engaged me.

The building itself I do not pretend to describe minutely. Guide-books tell of its magnificent portal and its bride's door; of the faëry-like sacrament house, carved (I should say breathed) in stone by Adam Krafft, which leans against a pillar at the entrance of the

choir; of the splendid crucifix on the altar by Veit Stoss; and the singular floating group of the Salutation from the same hand. I had got the bead-roll of these curiosities by heart, but I had not been prepared for the overpowering effect of the interior. This does not merely depend upon the architectural boldness and spaciousness of the choir, which appeared to me as Gothic of the best epoch — nor yet upon the solemnity of the narrow and lofty nave, which is dimly monastic. To me, there was an authority and impressiveness in the long file of saints and hierarchs which line the aisle of this Lutheran church: and feelings yet deeper were awakened by the sight of insignia and escutcheons which hang every spandril and every pillar; — not a hatchment having been touched (it would seem) since the days when they were first hung up. "You must see the churches of Nuremburg," said one of the most accomplished Catholics of the day to a friend of mine, "to know what the Reformation has taken from us." And, as a treasury of the works of religious Art, they are, indeed, unpa-

ralleled in their richness: little less remarkable as a store of family memorials. The very windows in the choir attest not merely the faith and the wealth, but the emulation, of the grand old burghers of Nuremburg. Each is grander than its neighbour; each was the gift of a separate house — the Volkamers carrying the day by their offering, which cost fourteen thousand *gulden*. It is strange to observe, in the midst of all the devotion that went to this enrichment of God's holy temple by the ministry of Art, a touch of human pride and human longing to hand down to posterity an influential and renowned name; and, while I felt the authority of the Church, it was impossible wholly to forget the magnificence of the Citizen, any more than the piety of the Artist.

From the Laurence-Kirche I passed to the Frauen-Kirche, where the Romish worship is still celebrated. It is outwardly a splendid but small specimen of the richest Gothic; within, poor and tinselled in its decorations compared with the superb temple I had quitted. Then, passing the exquisite fountain in the market-

place hard by, I was led up to the Burg — a strong castle, where the patriarchal linden-tree in the court-yard, and its rude Saxon chapel, and a long array of ill-proportioned narrow chambers garnished with worthless and ancient pictures, take one back to the darker times of rough and almost Pagan barbarism; and it was necessary to cast a look every now and then through the thick window embrasures upon the florid and fantastic town-panorama at our feet, to remember how much wealth and luxury and splendour had been accumulated since those grim towers had been built up. There, too, I lingered till but the last hour of sunshine was left me for the crowning delight of the day, in a visit to the gem of all the gems of Nuremburg.

This, in my estimation, is the Joannes Kirchhof, a burial-ground not far without the town. The pilgrim is reminded, on his way thither, of the pride and affluence of the place by the country-houses of the citizens which lie along the road, — comely and substantial dwellings. He is reminded of its belief by the sight of the seven stations which were set up by Mar-

tin Ketzel, a devout citizen, on return from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, at the precise traditional distances measured betwixt Jerusalem and Calvary, where Christ paused on his last doleful pilgrimage. That the sculpture of these, by Adam Krafft, has been of a thoughtful and earnest pathos, may be seen by the one bas-relief which has been restored. In his day there was no dalliance with forms at the expense of the spirit within. I understand too little of the technicalities of the sculptor's art; but had I been fifty-fold more ignorant, I must have been touched by the intensely devotional expression of these tablets — mute remembrancers of a hereafter, set up in the daily sight of those whose lives rolled away in luxury and aggrandisement, — busy trade and curious invention !

But the *Via Dolorosa*, though full of serious and not profitless suggestion, struck me less than the burial-ground when it was reached. Along the road the spiritual mysteries of Christianity are mutely set forth in wholesome contrast to the evidences of life and wealth and

acquisition; but, in a strange revenge, as it were, its termination introduces the pilgrim into the proudest place where human Ambition ever asserted itself in the presence of Death. The worthies of Nuremburg are buried vain-gloriously beneath sarcophagi of strong granite — boldly formed, sharply chiselled, and bedecked with bronze insignia such as must strike the mind, if even they did not attract the eye as rich and curious works of art. For there lies the locksmith, in default of feudal device, with the emblems of his craft above him, — the keys, the saw, and the hammer. The printer's sepulchre bears the press, executed in like imperishable form. Among these magnificent mausolea, belonging to the rich and great men of the place, are the tombs of Albrecht Durer and his friend Wilibald Pirkheimer, Veit Stoss, Sandrart, the Behaims — one of whom went out with Columbus, — and Hans Sachs, the stout and cheerful cobbler poet. Almost all are as freshly preserved as if Nuremburg had kept its strength and pomp and

belief even unto this day! I could have lingered there a year to read the inscriptions and admire the splendid bronzes. And my cicerone (who was a thorough Nuremburgher, and proud of what he had to show) eyed me like a friend, for my unwillingness to leave a place so full of the fond poetry of human pride. But the day was fast declining; and I returned to the town by a lovely suburban circuit among old walls, broken with bits of vineyard and magnificent trees clad in Autumn's ripest gold and brown — and narrow gateways disclosing long avenues of ancient buildings. By this time Twilight had come down in its loveliest form, with a tinge of frost in the air, which made me not unwilling to end my meditations by the silent side of the German's chamber-companion — a stove.

It was, indeed, no vexation to me that the theatre in Nuremburg gave no performances that evening. I was told that its opera had a certain repute in its district, and had yielded more than one popular singer to the larger theatres.

But I was discomposed, in turning over the tea-paper pages of the town Gazette, by meeting, among the oddly domestic advertisements which fill the columns of a German journal, with a zealous call to the managers of the theatre to delight the public by ordering a performance of Lortzing's "Czar und Zimmermann." As I knew this manner of petitioning to be constantly employed in Germany, the thing itself did not surprise me. But the flimsy nature of the music chosen was felt to be a grievance; for my fancy was in a mood which would have gone far towards the denial of the admission of any opera whatsoever, as a thing too modish and frivolous for such a haunted place as Nuremburg!

It would have been strange if a town so forward in enterprise and mechanical invention, so affluent in the feelings that generate works of art, should have failed to contribute its share of wonders and worthies to Music, as well as to Painting and Architecture. Accordingly, as early as the fifteenth century, we find it pro-

ducing the man whom a clever writer * calls "the Paganini of his time," Conrad Paulmann, who, though born blind, attained to such admirable proficiency on the organ, the violin, the flute, and the trumpet, that the sovereigns of Europe quarrelled to possess him, — the Emperor Frederic III. giving him a suit of gold tissue and a gold-mounted sword; the Duke of Ferrara a bribe of "many precious things;" Albert III., Duke of Bavaria, at last winning the prize for Munich, where the artist remained till his death in the year 1473; and where a marble sepulchre in Our Lady's church, representing him playing upon the organ, may be seen to this day. About the same time, too, the annalists tells us, flourished the Gerls: Father Conrad, who was living in the year 1461, a renowned lutist; and Hans, his son, who distinguished himself yet more remarkably by his manufacture of stringed instruments, by his performance on the violins and lutes he made so well, and by his being among the first who composed and published music for others to per-

* Mainzer: "Esquisses Musicales."

form. Besides their names, John Neudörffer's precious little catalogue * of the renowned artists of Nuremburg gives us the "style and title" of Burckhardt and Fella, two famous organ-builders; and a notice of John Meuschel, trumpet-maker and town trumpeter, who made a silver trumpet for Leo X.; — all these within the compass of the sixteenth century. It was but a few years later, in 1618, that one of the earliest essays at musical drama in Germany was promulgated at Nuremburg, in the *Schönes Singtspil von dreyen bösen Weiben.* It was there, too, at the close of the same seventeenth century, that John Christopher Denner added one of its most valuable instruments to the orchestra, by the invention of the clarionet. Even in Burney's time, Nuremburg maintained a certain individuality in Music, by its being the only German town where scores and other compositions were engraved on copper plates instead of being printed in type.

* "Johann Neudörffers Nachrichten von den vornehmsten Künstlern und Werkleuten so innerhalb hundert Jahren in Nürnberg gelebt haben, 1546, nebst der Forsetzung von Andreas Gulden, 1660."

I had not then my common-place book at my elbow, to comfort me with these assurances that Music had fared well in a place so richly decorated by the kindred expressions of beautiful imaginings which Painting and Sculpture present; and was obliged to put up with the desecration — such as the petition for Lortzing's music seemed to my unreasonable fancy — as best I might. If I could, I would not have been less fastidious and bigoted for that one hour, — less intensely impressed by the spirit of the place, — less imperatively called away from the times and manners of the world we are living in!

The church of St. Sebald, where I began my Saturday's ramble among the treasures of Nuremburg, is yet more magnificent and fuller of ancestral memorials than its rival building. If St. Laurence, too, has the Duke of Nassau's house close in his neighbourhood, close to St. Sebald's is the parsonage-house, with Melchior Pfinzing's window; and hard by — backed by three mansions, the centre one of which is

especially rich in florid ornament — stands the new statue, by Rauch, of Albert Durer, which was inaugurated in the May of 1840 with a splendid festivity. I love the feeling which makes the Nuremburghers resolve to do honour to the memory of the most renowned among their worthies, and yet I cannot but think the form of their homage a questionable one; at least, if Charles Lamb's principle of "being modest for a modest man" holds good in Art as well as in beneficence. Surely, one would not write a new play in commemoration of Shakspeare, or a new "Hallelujah" to do homage to Handel. Would not a Durer *stift* (foundation) have been more in accordance with the spirit of the place? A Durer *verein* (association) there is. To set up a new effigy within a stone's-throw of the master-works of Krafft and Stoss and Peter Visscher, is no holiday task, even for a Rauch. The head of his statue seemed to me feeble, and its drapery wiry, and its forms burly. If all these thoughts were passing through my mind while I was waiting for the sexton's keys, how much more earnestly did they occur to me when the

doors were thrown open, and I stood before the first object of interest in the church, — Peter Visscher's master-work, the shrine of the Saint, with its kings, and its fathers, and its twelve apostles; all miniature figures—if miniature that may be called which, in largeness of style and elevation of expression, may compete with the best Colossus of ancient art. And yet the deep religious feeling of these is not more eminent than the exquisite frolicsomeness of the fancy which has thrown off mermaids and elves, struggling from among foliage, by the thousand, with as exuberant a fancy and as airy a grace as if the stubborn brass were a thing to be wreathed and embroidered by the action of a passing breath. There is a week's good work for any eye in this shrine: how, then, shall I write about it who could only bestow a poor hour upon the examination? Other things in the church were more rapidly comprehended, and are more briefly to be set down. It contains memorial upon memorial, monument upon monument. Above the tomb of the Behaim family, for instance, is hung a curious votive picture of

Paradise, with the whole history "of Man's first disobedience," by Kreuzfelder. The Tuchers, again, in the midst of a pompous announcement of their names and works, show a skeleton bearing a scroll in its hand; and above, a lamp, lighted in the days of Catholicism, and which the tolerant spirit of Lutheranism, and the Nuremburgher's lingering pride in his ancestry, still allow to burn. What a romance of history and opinion could one have conjured up by the aid of that tiny flame! Outside the church is another sepulchre, with a Calvary group behind it, sculptured by Adam Krafft, and a rich open-worked stone lantern before it; but there the light is extinct, and the name forgotten.

The number of endowments still in force is not the least interesting feature of Nuremburg. After a glimpse at the Moritz Kapelle, which is now made the repository of such antique and inferior pictures by Wohlgemuth and Kulmbach and Schongauer and Cranach as were not thought worthy of a place in the Berlin or Munich or Boisserée collections, I went across to the Rath-haus, or Town-hall, a spacious

building, with an Italian front masking one of those elder intricate Gothic compositions of staircase and court and secret passage which help to give the town its Middle-Age character. Passing through a gateway into a central court, we were about to ascend the staircase which conducts us to the show-rooms, when my guide asked me to stand aside for a moment. "The old men," he said, "are coming down." "What old men?" was the natural question. In explanation I was told that a dole of clothing, bequeathed by one of the Münzer family, was annually distributed on that day to a hundred old men, who had just been invested with the same. I never saw a more capital picture than was made by their descent. In the foreground, at the bottom of the staircase, stood a cloaked and tassel-capped burgher, with his hands clasped behind him, resting on his cane — the very figure Rembrandt has painted a thousand times. Presently we heard the dull shuffling sound of feeble feet, and down crept the ancient men in every degree of old age and decrepitude, the sun catching their white heads and thankful

frostbitten faces as they passed down the wide gloomy staircase, crowned with new hats, and wrapt in their long warm coats of greasy olive-coloured cloth; neither gossiping nor wrangling, but helping each other. Indeed, I fancied the general expression of countenance quite different from that angry sturdiness or querulous irritability one so often encounters among the old in English almshouses. In the midst their ranks were diversified by the figure of a stalwart old woman, who was striding down three steps at a time to carry home to her bedridden husband his allotted coat and hat, which she wore in his stead. It was precisely the group one would have bespoken to see in Nuremburg!

When the last of the troop had vanished, we mounted to the great hall, a spacious and dark apartment, of very ancient date, decorated with a fresco painting, by Albert Durer, of the Triumphs of Maximilian. But I could hardly look at these — hardly take note of a grand piano, of most primitive build, surrounded by music-desks, which told to what peaceful purposes it was now appropriated; for I was still thinking

of the procession of old men; and some will understand the pleasure with which I gazed on the handsome portrait of their benefactor — a grave bearded gentleman, with a furred mantle of velvet, and a gold chain, — which had been brought from the family house of the Münzers to preside over the distribution of the bounty.

From the great hall I was led upstairs to the Council Chamber, through a passage on whose splendid stuccoed ceiling is represented a tournament held at Nuremburg in 1434. A mere modern room as this Council Chamber looks, the guide-books tell us it has concealed doors in the walls which communicate with subterraneous passages, by which the patricians of the city could withdraw themselves from the vengeance or rebellion of their fellow-citizens. To me, who had neither time nor (for the moment) inclination to indulge into the researches *à la Radcliffe* which such a tale is calculated to tempt, the Council Chamber was more than a mere modern room, on the strength of the nine portraits of Nuremburg patricians round it: amongst them, the heads of a Pfinzing, who

had left a legacy benefiting another hundred of old men — of a Landauer, who had founded the free-school — of Münzer, who had joined with Conrad Gross, endowing the hospitals — and of one of the Mendels, whose piety had led to the building of the Moritz Kapelle, now secularised to serve the purposes of Art at the express instance of King Louis of Bavaria. I was pondering over the last illustration of the magnificent spirit of the place, when, slowly and unexpectedly, the organ in St. Sebald's, distinctly audible from the place where I stood, began to give out some of those mighty chords which are even more imposing, thus heard afar off, than when one is close beneath them. "They are practising," said my *valet-de-place*, "for the Reformation Festival to-morrow; and that is why the theatre will be shut."

I fear to become prosy in the detail of personal impressions, and saw Nuremburg too casually to pretend any amendment of or addition to the catalogue of its rarities furnished

by Murray's excellent "Hand-Book." Therefore I will not expatiate on the exquisite delicacy of the Schöner Brunnen, with its pinnacles and sculptures putting to shame the best of our Queen Eleanor's crosses. Nor will I dwell upon the racy characteristic humour of the bronze peasant presiding over the fountain in the goose market, — a boor who, like John Gilpin, clasps a bird under either arm "to keep the balance true." The curious truth of his physiognomy might be tested by turning from it to the solid-looking men, in their high-crowned and broad-banded hats, garnished with nosegays, as they foddered the oxen which had drawn their carts, or adjusted the perforated brass muzzles of their horses, — not the least primitive things I saw in Nuremburg.

The rest of the morning, then, I pass over, and the rummage in Herr Campe's library for such books as belonged to a place which had taken entire possession of me; and the long desultory walk, in which I expended a couple of the afternoon hours, unwilling to load my memory with more than it could bear, and

resolving at every step to return to Nuremburg for a sojourn some future day. During a part of the long evening, I occupied myself with picking out a few musical dates and facts from a file of Munich journals, by way of breaking fresh ground in that quarter. They were giving at that time "Der Alchymist," by Count Pocci. And of nine works added or revived in the preceding twelvemonth, five had been French, three German — if the "Graf Armand" ("Les Deux Journées") of Cherubini be permitted to count as such, — with the "Alceste" of Gluck, and "Die Beiden Schutzen" of Lortzing; — and one Italian, the "Mosé" of Rossini. The same strange want of nationality in theatrical music, then, seemed to pervade the Bavarian as the Prussian capital. Yet who has done more for national art in Germany than King Louis? I cannot comprehend why it should be that Music should be left out of the calculation. But it seemed to be so.

Betimes the next morning I was on my way to St. Sebald's church, to assist in the cele-

bration of the anniversary of the Reformation. For this I could have imagined a more befitting *locale* than was made up by the presence of all those saints and angels and Coronations of the Virgin, and those candles and crucifixes, and that ever-burning Tucher light, and those escutcheoned monuments. The psalms for the day were advertised at the church doors, where also a kind of voluntary contribution was going on, every one quietly putting in his poor's penny as he passed the corner where stood the dried-up holy-water vase. The building was filling rapidly with a congregation thoroughly piebald in its appearance. Old women were there in stiff buckram bonnets, which might pass for the head-gear of the Sisters of Charity; burghers in every pattern of *mütze* and upper-benjamin; with abundance of peasant men and women, the latter putting all modern fashionists to shame by the grace of their traditional head-dress —a composition of black ribbon, with pendent loops behind, a caul of silver filigree, and sometimes a forehead-band of gay red or blue. There was as much walking about among the men as can be seen in any Catholic church —

(I caught a glimpse of the schnellpost Hylas wandering about); — I cannot add, as much of that abstracted and silent devotion among the women, which is so remarkable and worthy an object of imitation in the behaviour of those attending what some have been pleased to call "the idolatrous sacrifice of the Mass."

Short time I had to look round me and note as little as this; for, while I was considering the remarkable mixture of creeds past and present which the scene presented, the organ burst out, and with it one thousand voices, into a grand Lutheran Corale which I had in vain sought for in Herr Schneider's choir-book. It will be best known to my reader as the tune tortured to stage uses by Meyerbeer in "Les Huguenots:"

But what were all Meyerbeer's effects, produced by "rhyming and twirling" that noble old psalm, compared with the grandeur of this?

I have never been more strongly moved by music. As verse after verse of the grand tune rolled through the dim vaults of the church with a mighty triumph, it appeared to my fancy as if the effigies and pictures on the walls began to shake and tremble and fade,— the Saints to droop their heads dejectedly, — and the votive light, from which, somehow or other, I never strayed far when in the church of St. Sebald, to flicker as if it were about to expire. The aspect of the congregation, too, seemed to undergo a metamorphosis, as if a sternness and defiance came up into the eyes and lips of the people while they joined loudly and heartily in the plain but lofty song of trust and thanksgiving. I see before me now one stout old man, who was sitting by himself, psalter in hand, with a Geneva cap on his head, — a study for a Balfour of Burley, — singing at the very top of his Lutheran lungs, at the very feet of *such* a sweet, angelic, palm-bearing saint, who drooped from her niche above him! And as I looked and listened, strange was the conflict between the homage due to those ancients and

bold thinkers who broke for the world the cerements in which Mind was becoming decrepit, and between a natural yearning after that still elder faith which was addressing the heart through the eye with a power not to be withstood, even at the moment that the ear was ringing with the triumph of its extinction.

After such a strong musical sensation, I could not stay for a poor motett, poorly performed with full orchestra (another relic of Popery!). If the instruments had not been weak, if the vocal execution had not been flimsy, if the music had not been head-music, at best the effect must have been small, after that colossally grand part-singing. So I issued forth into the sunshiny street, perfectly silent and deserted, for a last quiet look at the most fascinating place I have ever entered.

I was bound at noon for Frankfort. The return journey was long and unpleasant: a peasant woman with a basket of doves — a government official, who had no words to

waste on any of his companions — and a red-eyed cripple, whom one could hardly sit opposite, still less touch, without having to control most painful feelings, — offered nothing to replace the amusing little romance the progress of which I had watched on my road to Nuremburg. The weather, too, began to break; and if I had not had my journal to think over, and my version of Victor Hugo's "*Guitarre*" to complete, the hours would indeed have seemed interminable, ere we were delivered at midnight into the cavernous court-yard of the Post at Wurzburg.

MUSIC AND MANNERS

IN

FRANCE.

PARISIAN CONTRASTS.

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CHAPTER I.

SUNDAY MORNING.

Nuremburg to Paris. — Fellow Traveller. — Talk about Art. — Church *de la Belle Epine.* — *Fronton* of the Pantheon. — Notre Dame de Lorette. — Traffic in the Temple. — Saints and Fashions. — The old Churches of Paris. — Figures to be seen in them. — A Wedding in Saint Germain l'Auxerrois. — A pleasanter Group. — A Lying-in-State in Notre Dame. — Criticisms by the side of the Dead. — A Note on the Restorations at St. Denis. — Church of St. Eustache. — Its Fête-day. — The Troubadour of a *Guinguette.* — High Mass. —M. Dietsch's Music.—Harp and Gong ; with a Word on the intrinsic and associated Sacredness of different Instruments. — Connection of Art and Religion indispensable to the Production of the highest Works. — A last Illustration of the Union of Church and Opera.

To exchange Nuremburg for Paris, without intermediate pause — and Paris, too, convulsed

by expectations of the Guizot ministry's *début*, was not altogether unlike passing from the calmness of a cloister to those mansions of Pandemonium, if there be such, where Hate, and Contention, and restless Ambition are allowed to wear the masks of Luxury and Civilisation. As my one travelling companion from Frankfort was French to the thorough war-point, as impatient to arrive in time for the first-fruits of the *crise* as I should have been for the first night of Meyerbeer's long-deferred opera, it was a peculiar piece of good fortune that, besides the courtesy which belongs to an old name, he should also possess the eye of an artist, and the perception of a poet — nay, more, during a South German tour, have recently visited the church of St. Sebald, and St. John's burial-ground, and admired them little less fervently than myself. Thus, having contented himself with a significant "*au revoir bientôt*" to the fortifications of Mayence, for the rest of our forty-eight hours' ride we had abundant neutral ground to meet upon. We could admire, in concord, the beautiful old

building upon the hill but a mile or two before the traveller in the *mallepost* reaches his dinner at Châlons-sur-Marne. This is the Church de la Belle Epine, built — so our host told us, while serving out the soup — by the English: a relic of the richest Gothic, worth half a day's study. Though we could not discuss the new ministry, we could talk of the new works in Paris; beginning with the July column — that dwarfish and over-decorated failure, whose gilt and winged Genius, crowning its summit, whimsically brings to mind Ingoldsby's couplet in "The Monster Balloon:"

"And Fame, with one leg in the air, like the Queen,
With three wreaths and a trumpet shall over them lean."

From the July column it was a natural step to the preparations commanded of M. Marochetti for the obsequies of Napoleon, and the wrong done in withholding the commission from David, "because," said my companion, with bitter emphasis, "he is a republican!" Thence, of course, we passed naturally to David's *chef-d'œuvre*, the *fronton* of the Pantheon, — to

La Madeleine, that gayest and least solemn of temples, — and to that tawdry bazaar, Notre Dame de Lorette, which even the sweetness of its organ, by M. Cavaillè-Coll, cannot lure me into admiring. "As to Notre Dame," continued ——, with that inimitable *nonchalance* which no Englishman can ever acquire, "after all, it is well enough for what it is!" and out came a tale of "sellers of doves and money-changers," to speak metaphorically, who carry on during the hours of worship a recognised traffic which it is needless to particularise. The poor Lady of Loretto! she has fallen into irreverent hands. A whimsical anecdote is told of the series of sacred pictures which adorn the clerestory wall, with the crude blue and scarlet and orange of the modern French school. Their artist began his labours under the reign of a past dynasty of fashions, when no lady could be dressed — and, of course, no St. Barbara or Bridget—without a balloon on each shoulder as large as her bust. While the work was in progress, the compass veered to the opposite extreme; and the painter, not to be behind his time, reconsidered his

costume, and absolutely changed all the draperies of his figures — the *gigot* sleeves of the holy women, that is, into the true scanty cut *à l'Amadis!*

I hope these are only two good stories. The latter, at all events, is not a type of the spirit and taste now presiding over the beautification of the sacred edifices of Paris.

To me, even before the architect and the glass-painter and the carver had taken them in hand, the churches in the French metropolis had always had a particular charm. The guide-books make little account of them; but, like the flitting figures of the Sisters of Charity, whom the heart loves to follow in the streets, they offer precisely that repose so eminently needed amid all the life and passion of Paris. The sight of a grim and overhanging porch, with its time-melted sculptures, and a dwarfish old woman or two crouched on its steps to carry on some small traffic beneath its shelter, is a temptation I can never resist. While prying about within their precincts, I have hardly ever failed to encounter some

figure upon which the imagination could fasten. One day it has been a *grisette*, tripping down the stream of sunshine shed along the dusty pavement from the high windows, *carton* in hand, and pausing before the chapel of her favourite saint to take out her week's allowance of little sins in a short prayer or two. One day it has been the meagre mournful old man or woman who watches the triangular frame of tin, with its rapidly-wasting votive candles: another, the identical Maturin or Lucas of Molière's comedies and Johannot's sketches, with his coarse plenteous hair and his *pot au feu* complexion, his *sabots* clattering as he comes, but taught by some remain of traditional reverence, especially if he be of Breton stock, to clatter — as old Mr. Wesley's children were taught to cry — quietly. I have witnessed in one or other of them almost all the ceremonies marking the progress of life which are so interesting in a strange land. The first time I entered the triple porch of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, recently repaired, and its choir-windows renewed with stained glass, as richly violet as if they were

set up to promise a second advent of Napoleon, I came in for a wedding. The bride, it is true, was an ugly woman, with projecting teeth, and not very young; but she was tricked out with orange flowers and a blonde veil as tastefully as though she had been a Duchess; and she tried her best to elongate her mouth to that meek simper which the beauty-painters in France render so well. The bridegroom I but remember for the tenderness of his side-glances, which, considering their object, were, as I once heard a tourist remark of the ruined castles of the Rheingau, "amazingly well got up." The two were standing ceremoniously under a scarf of white damask, held by a couple of youths, who jested behind their backs while the service proceeded, till the officiating priest approached the bridegroom with the pouch,—whether for the *quête* (collection) for the poor, or for his own fees, I know not. This the youth deposited betwixt his finger and thumb; but the old white-haired man, whose lynx eyes followed the operation, perceived some informality, and began to protest against it. "It *was* enough," the

bridegroom declared; "he would give no more." "It was not," replied the priest, emptying the contents of the little bag into his wrinkled palm; and, from contesting the amount under their breath, the two were beginning to gesticulate, and to scold audibly, when the bride, with a magnanimity worthy of imitation, dived into her jaunty reticule, and, drawing out a coin, with a contemptuous shrug of disdain, put an end to the dispute. I strolled away, amused rather than gratified. Another chapel showed me a prettier group. This was gathered on the occasion of a baptism, or what our prayer-book calls "the churching of women." In the centre was the tiny pink-faced *marmotte*, warmly swathed, and daintily balanced in the arms of a middle-aged woman, with good neighbour in every line of her honest face, and a tear in her eye. Close to her was the meek mother on her knees, and a couple of huge whiskered soldiers kneeling behind her, and bowing their faces over their cocked hats. The little party was flanked on the one side by a country lad with earrings, and on the other by a young artist,

bound for the Louvre, with his portfolio under his arm. In spite of his magnificent pelisse, and his wide-brimmed hat, he was as hermaphrodite in the aspect of his long black curls, and his scrupulously smooth throat, as if he had taken the fashion of his toilette from the authoress of "Mauprat" and "Les Maîtres Mosaistes."

I could make out a gallery of such little scenes gathered one day in St. Germain dès Pres, with its antique monuments and its uncouth pulpit heavily canopied with a marble drapery; — another in St. Gervais (Couperin's church), with its Pietro Perugino, and its (so-called) Albrecht Durer, a picture of many pictures; — a third in St. Mèry, with its grand Gothic portal: but I will only trouble the reader with one more.

This was the lying-in-state of M. de Quelen, the late Archbishop of Paris, in his own cathedral. I have made few pilgrimages to Notre Dame without being repaid by some glimpse of the "*Avant*," "*Pendant*," or "*Après*" of French life and history yet more suggestive than the

mere outward solemnities of long-drawn aisles and flying buttresses. Once (have I not already said it?) it was a gipsy girl dancing in the Parvis I saw: once, I turned over those treasures in the sacristy, which, if there were sermons in damask and gold lace, could preach so solemn a homily — the coronation vestments of Napoleon! But the show of the seventh of January, 1840, was more imposing, and had also its moral. It was a brilliantly-frosty morning; — the sunshine brought out every fragment of building, old and new, in that incomparable prospect of the *quais*, with a crystalline sharpness and transparency never to be seen in London by any chance. The cries of the streets seemed to take a double shrillness from the exquisite clearness of the air; and the fumes of the little smoking kitchens on the Pont Neuf a visible savouriness — (have you been ever ungenteel enough, dear Paris pilgrim, to stop and taste *la galette* there?) A crowd of people, quick, merry, and vociferous, was streaming towards Notre Dame, and the Place beneath its grand pair of towers was alive

with all the stir and colour and variety of a fair. It was necessary to fall into a long *queue*, extending a quarter round the church, to gain the door of entrance; and there were bustling hither and thither suttlers with their steaming viands, and hawkers in shabby mourning, crying the last edifying sayings of "M. l'Archévêque," in a tone as gay as if they had been calling the piece of the evening among the benches of a theatre! There, too, were gay *grisettes* carrying on an interchange of repartee with National Guardsmen — and *gamins*, in their blue *blouses*, pushing every where in search of such prey as the *palletots* of the unwary could yield from their pockets — and young black-browed artists, muffled to the moustache in those guilty-looking cloaks the sight of which suggests conspiracy and melodrame. Hovering on the skirts of this motley and most un-funereal procession might be seen a cab or two, so English in its magnificence of horse and minuteness of tiger, as to remind one, even there, how marvellously in France has flourished the good seed of sporting propensities sown in the latter days of the cen-

tury by the Duke de Chartres, and other of the Anglomanes of the day.

We were at last at the portal, about as much prepared for the spirit of the scene within as if Longchamps, and not the presence of Death in the house of God, had been the object of our — curiosity ! On entering, the eye was struck by the dim perspective of the side aisle, hung with sweeping and dingy black draperies: the ear presently caught a shrill and sonorous chanting of men and boys as the splendid chapel was approached, where the deceased reclined on his gilded state-bier. The corpse was mitred and stoled and shod gorgeously, with crosier in hand; the lights of a hundred tapers falling upon that waxen mask which had been a face, and upon the rigid fingers. Several priests knelt at the foot of the bier, and rose slowly and reverently, one by one, to make genuflexions at the feet of the corpse, and to kiss its emaciated hands. It seemed impossible to consider such a spectacle without a certain awe and reluctance. To what holier and more quiet death-beds of old men my thoughts had wandered away

during the second when, in my turn, I was allowed to pause before the gilded rails of the altar, it were superfluous to tell. But I was suddenly startled back to Paris by a pair of voices from the midst of a pair of beards, the sound of which detached itself from the hum of whispering speakers, and the dull sound of feet slowly moving on, which of themselves sufficiently destroyed the solemnity of the place.

"He sees her, Adolphe! that handsome young fellow with the broad shoulders, just before he knelt,—I am sure he saw her." The "her" was an excessively pretty and moderately-coquettish nymph, whose toilette told of a very liberal *jour de l'an:* the "he" who knelt was, of course, one of the priests.

"*Bah!*" replied the other, adjusting a *lorgnette*, "I cannot make out whether they have painted the old man's cheeks or not. They have stuffed his chest well, at all events; and, I dare say, given him a waist."

"What will you bet he is not painted?"

"Never a *sou*," was the louder answer.

"They know how to get up these things. S——! I have forgotten my cigar-case!"

"Silence! silence!" cried one of the functionaries in attendance, in a tone little less grotesque and shrill than Monlaur throws into the word when playing the *huissier* in "Figaro." And we moved on. Every word that passed must have been heard by the officiating priests; and, as I was pushed to the door of exit, amid outcries and personalities little less secular (to use a gentle expression), I could not but bethink me of the remark which —— made on the far-famed cemetery of Père la Chaise, where a tip-toe flight of *coryphées* seem almost demanded by the jaunty monuments and the operatic elegies of the place. "They have neither time, taste, nor spirits for Death in Paris, — save on the stage!"

Since I first knew France, it has become the fashion to expend large sums of money on the churches of Paris, — not only in restoring their

monuments* and the fragments of ancient sculpture, and filling the windows with painted

* Foremost among these restorations are the works in progress at the Cathedral of Saint Denis, which have been going on for several years, and include a splendid organ by MM. Cavaillé-Coll. I spent a couple of most interesting hours in the church and in the organ, on one of the most ungenial days of last November. "The arrangement of the choir," says a note made in my journal, "by which a sort of pale rose-coloured reflection is thrown upon the white arches and massive piers around it, is, perhaps, too pretty, but still *painter*esque." The organ fills the whole breadth of the aisle, and, following the peculiar shape of the vault, is thrown, to my thinking, into the least graceful form of Gothic construction; that is, a steep gable divided by a high turret down the centre and flanked with two lower ones. Some one was playing when I went in; I listened eagerly for the sounds, and will not prejudge "a half-done deed" by declaring that, though full, they seemed to me *woolly*, and the tone of the pedal pipes hardly to have that searching weight and depth which pedal pipes ought to have. I had been spoilt, I suppose, by the Silbermann organs at Dresden. On the other hand, there was a sweetness and sonorousness of tone which I have not met in any French instrument. I was afterwards most politely shown over the organ by Mr. Barker, a countryman who has gained a *brévet d'invention* here for facilitating the touch of these enormous instruments. The construction seems to me finished with infinite care and neatness within (to this the sweetness and

glass, only one degree less brilliant than that which the Terrorists shivered; but also in reinstating their musical services. The old ferocious and tinkling organs, as devoid of any real devotional tone as a dowager in the days of the Regency, are gradually falling into discredit; and the old players, whose evolutions used to remind me of nothing so much as a game of hunt-the-slipper played by a party sitting on all the four ranges of keys, are giving way to better instructed and more reverential successors. Classical preluders and steady fuguists will come in time; and I think a Schneider or a Mendelssohn would run as fair a chance, just now, of becoming the fashion in Paris as the works of Gluck and the *names* of Palestrina and Orlando Lasso. A chapel is in formation in St. Germain l'Auxerrois, under the auspices of M. Julien Martin, whose musical direction in the cathedral of Angers was followed by very

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duration of the Silbermann organs is to be largely ascribed), the arrangement unusually void of complexity, and the mechanism of the bellows at once light and efficient. — *Nov.* 11. 1840.

good results. There was more than a rumour, too, of an utter and entire reform of the musical part of the services at Notre Dame. But as these innovations and renovations were only in expectancy last November, and as I had heard much of the music in the church of Saint Eustache, I resolved to bend my steps thitherward on the Sunday morning after my arrival.

The ninth of the month happened, by good fortune, to be the Saints' day of the church. As I approached it, so numerous became the concourse of people, that I could have fancied myself in the sabbath-keeping town of Edinburgh. To be sure, the aspect of the Paris congregation was something different! How different, again, from the aspect of those among whom, but seven short days before, I had celebrated the Reformation Festival in the church of St. Sebald at Nuremburg! As I passed the tower of St. Jacques de la Boucherie, there issued from one of the dark noisome lanes thereabouts (where the smell of *friture* is never extinct) a boy of seventeen, in a *palletot* of black plush, and with a *toque* of the same

on his thick formally curled hair. He had a guitar strung over his shoulders by a broad blue ribbon; and, bringing it half round, as he ambled his way over the kennels, with the true Parisian step, half trip half totter, he pinched out, in a sprightly *pizzicato*, the "Fleuve du Tage," or "Ma Nacelle," which probably it was his day's duty to repeat for the frequenters of that *guinguette* or *café* to which he was Troubadour in ordinary. Himself and his guitar obviously had many friends in that respectable quarter; and he only ceased his intimations of melody when beneath the portal. I traced him a few steps within the sanctuary, and must say that his *œillades* were capitally effective, thrown out from behind the shade of the lofty column against which he leaned in a sublime and picturesque attitude — the very figure for a Delacroix or Deveria to paint!

But I soon lost sight of him, for the five aisles of the church of St. Eustache — noble in spite of the classical or Palladian hand which has, some time or other, revised all its Gothic details — were absolutely crammed with

a motley concourse of all sexes, ages, and conditions, in the midst of which my Troubadour was no marvel. The amount of worship in the place it is less easy to estimate. I remarked, however, that there were many operatives of the very lowest class, acutely attentive to the music of the Mass, and from whom, when any chromatic change or striking effect of the orchestra came in course, proceeded such a hum of admiration and interchange of approving look as might have been elicited from a Puritan congregation by some doctrinal subtlety or some fire-and-brimstone denunciation expounded by its pulpit Boanerges. It was difficult, indeed, owing to the eagerness of these amateurs, who clustered upon chairs, leaning against each other, wherever a glimpse of the choir could be procured, to approach that part of the church.

The Mass was by M. Dietsch, the *maître de chapelle*. To match the gorgeous array of priests at the altar, in their damask and velvet and cloth of gold, he had provided a full and very fine orchestra, a numerous chorus, and

one or two efficient singers from the Opera for the *soli* parts; if I mistake not, M. Alexis Dupont among the number. The composition was clever and brilliant, and full of dramatic effects. The Kyrie and Gloria and Credo came severally in welcome relief after the merely chaunted parts of the service, where the monstrous organ above the grand entrance brayed out some of those brassy sudden chords I have already ventured to anathematise. But the Gloria in C major, $\frac{6}{8}$ time, after a few bars, fell into the *one-two* rhythmical swing to which a stage procession might have defiled; and, as it went on, I could not help calling up the aspect of the whole chorus of the Grand Opera, for which more than one composer has written music far heavier and less melodious. The "Credo," founded on the Gregorian chaunt, declaimed from the altar, had more of what we are used to consider the real church style; though the "Et Incarnatus" was introduced by such a wonderful tinkling of harps, that I was reminded of the vision in "Les Huguenots;" and, I think at the words

"judicare vivos et mortuos," a very fine trumpet effect, with a single stroke of the gong, again dramatised the solemn text not infelicitously.

One is compelled to apply strange words to strange things. We have seen the Church on the opera stage; — here was the Opera in the church — both the audience and the music. And yet I have since vainly endeavoured to give myself a reason why this or that peculiar instrument should be as unfit for sacred music as our associations seem to have made them, which shall be better than the absence of personality ascribed to organs I noted when listening to Herr Schneider. Certain it is, that there is hardly one component part of the modern orchestra which is not specified in the Psalms of David, or the Chronicles of the Old Testament. Miriam, the prophetess, led the women of Israel to rejoice over the overthrow of the horse and his rider with "timbrels and *with dances*." David enjoins the chosen people of God "to praise their Lord upon the harp," "with trumpets also and with shawms," "with the strings

and pipe." And "the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer," to the sound of which Nebuchadnezzar ordained that men should bow down and worship his golden image, were not instruments exclusively belonging to the heathen. If we say that with Christianity these things were swept away, as utensils made with hands, like the phylacteries of the Pharisees, and the traffickers who yet more shamelessly profaned the Temple, —what follows? The disunion of Art from Religion, — the uncompromising adoption of those tenets which find snares and sinfulness in the gifts of a gracious Providence, and believe that the eye with its discernment of form and colour, and the ear with its sensibility to sound, at best but minister to those sensual and pleasurable instincts the repression of which is ordained by Faith and Holiness. Such a creed as this has been already combated by implication throughout the whole of these sketches. I have written ill, or they have been read carelessly, if it be not obvious that I have assumed the vivifying and enduring principles of Art to be Truth and Belief, which

pertain to the spirit and not the senses of man. Without them, I cannot but believe that the Drama will take the form of feverish violent creations, such as serve to inflame men's minds when times of convulsion impend; and Painting will become a superficial array of those pedantries of detail, and those tricks of hand, which change with every new generation; and Music will only pander to the caprices of the egotistic and the half-instructed, at the expense of those vivid convictions which made a Handel, a Gluck, and a Beethoven immortal in their works. But though it be hard to say why a harp should be intrinsically less devotional than an organ-pipe, or a flageolet than a serpent, save upon narrow and insufficient grounds, it seems to me inevitable as a deduction, that the levity of spirit *, over which no associations of time and

* While I was transcribing these last pages for the press, one of the latest numbers of "Les Guêpes"— those monthly tracts in which the unscrupulous M. Alphonse Karr serves up the "accidents and offences" of the past four weeks in the true *soufflé* style — fell into my hands: one may stumble upon a *sors* even in "Les Guêpes,"— and mine was strange enough. "This advertisement is

place have power, confounding the emotions suitable to a lighted theatre with those belonging to the aisles of a cathedral, must influence unfavourably not only sacred but also secular Art. Thus, then, — to state the conclusion of the whole matter as regards Music: so long as the mind of France, as now, is wandering hither and thither in search of some point of settlement,— so long as the society of France remains to be a brilliant chaos of things most precious and things most vile cast up and swept together, where the honour of men and the virtue of women may be lightly derided even in the presence of the honourable and the virtuous,— the end, I think, will but be dissatisfaction. It matters not if there be brilliant orchestras and gigantic organs, — theatres adorned with every luxury of decoration by the most consummate taste, — and artists whose mechanical powers

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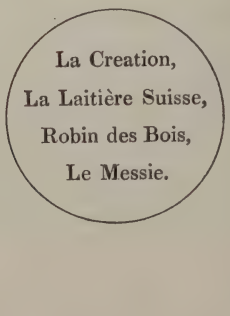
going the round of the press: On Sunday, M. Lacordaire will preach at Notre Dame in his *Dominican habit*." It reminds me of some of those country play-bills which announce that Mademoiselle Georges would act such or such a part — and "*wear all her diamonds*."

can receive no further cultivation. The employment of all these precious materials, being conducted on no principle save a prurient conformity to a world of fluctuating and licentious opinions and corrupt morality, can leave little permanent fruit behind it— can exercise little permanent influence on the progress of Art in Europe. We may continue in Music, as in more solid commodities, to take our toys and our fancies from our more ingenious neighbours: we may imitate them in all their mechanical readiness, but for examples of progress, and aim, and for standard additions to the world's store of ideas and creations, we must look elsewhere;—to the people who, not scorning the present, still recognise a future!

"What a pretty Mass!" said ——, whom I shook hands with just on leaving the church; adding, whether simply or sardonically the reader shall guess, — "but as for the 'Credo,' I prefer Donnizetti's, in 'Les Martyrs,' which Duprez sings so well, when they break the idols." The Church and the Opera again! *

* I do not throw this *refrain* out at random. Every

stranger in Paris of course frequents L'Opera Comique; the sparkle and brilliancy of which, — the point and completeness of its little dramas, the sprightliness of its music, and the exquisite care and finish in its *ensemble*, must engage the surliest *laudator temporis acti*. Now, too, the temple of that delightful amusement is, in itself, worth a visit — and a chapter, were not space precious. The new theatre, on the site of the favourite Italian Opera, is exquisite in the light and gay taste of its decorations. M. Berlioz, indeed, compared it to "a whited sepulchre," because the French have been used of late days to a degree of colour, in the ornaments of their public rooms, which no English eye can bear: but, by this time, the *beau monde* of Paris has become reconciled to the white and gold of the Salle Favart, — to the delicate gaiety of the *foyer*, with its mirrors and chandeliers, and its mosaic floor, always fresh and cool-looking. Having taken an observation of all these dainty devices last autumn, while waiting for the commencement of Nicolo's ever pretty "Joconde," I began, out of sheer idleness, to spell out the names of composers and *chefs-d'œuvre*, which, bound together within garlands, form a border of circular tablets round the high ceiling. The first I fell upon was this! —



CHAP. II.

THE PALACE AND THE PEOPLE.

A few more Contrasts.— Morning in *Le Jardin des Plantes*. — Lablache at Dinner. — Evening at Madame d'Abrantes'.— Her melancholy Death. — Versailles, as sketched by Titmarsh: — as seen by me. — The old *Noblesse* of France. — Life for French Morals. — The Historical Galleries. — A few of their Curiosities. — A King of *Papier-maché*. — The Princess Marie's Joan of Arc. — Two Sonnets. — The Princess Marie and M. Edgar Quinet. — Architecture for the People. — The Dog-kennels. — Normal School. — Music for the People. — M. Beranger and M. Wilhem. — The Method of the latter — its moral Influences. — The *Halle aux Draps*. — The Scholars — their Behaviour. — Possible Results. — Quotation from M. Frégier. — Artistic Fruit to be expected from the Musical Education of the People. — Truth and Purity the only solid Basis of Progress.—French Knowledge of Sacred Music.—The Influence of the People replacing that of the Palace.

I CANNOT close my journals of Paris without desultorily stringing together a few more of the contrasts and varieties of life and opinion which it is possible to embrace there within a small compass of time, if the world of people — not things

— be entered. When the Stradella breakfast I have already mentioned broke up, one of its fashionable patrons of art was bound for the Arsenal—another to inquire after the well-doing of his brood mares. M. le Prince ——, resolved to make a musical day of it, departed for one of M. Tilmant's delightful *matinées*, where some of the best chamber-music in Paris was that season to be heard. My flight took me further, in every sense of the word; yet, within half an hour, I was walking in the leafless alleys of Le Jardin des Plantes, as busily engaged among the traces left by its departed master-spirit, Cuvier, as if, so shortly before, I had not been entangled among the duets, choruses, and *finales* of the new opera, and the just-discovered chemical contrivance which was to get up a stage sunset, — like Nattier's rose, fifty times more beautiful than the reality.

I lingered late in Le Jardin, and left it all natural history. Dinner took me back, from the wonders of the vegetable and animal world, to the wonder of the operatic hemisphere. Lablache was at table, in the full flow of

those gay Neapolitan spirits of his, and that shrewd perception of character which gives to his stage personifications so much freshness as well as variety, and that gentlemanly good humour which deprives his mirth of bitterness yet more than of coarseness. We had a fair assortment of cleverness from all countries — merchants, politicians, men of pleasure and of title, and one or two handsome and intellectual heads; but in every point the artist carried the day, and ruled the table; and I think that my exclusive countrymen, —— and ——, must have eaten and drank and departed under the bewildering pressure of an entirely new idea — namely, that an Italian musician was not inevitably the effeminate and degraded and foolish being satirised in the days of Addison and Steele.

Another and most signal example of the contrasts to be encountered in Paris presented itself in the fourth change of scene, which served for close to a pleasant but rather hurrying day. This I found in the two small and humbly furnished rooms where Madame

la Duchesse d'Abrantes received her weekly guests. Who could enter them and not think of the brilliant *fêtes* of Paris, at which, as Junot's wife, she had queened it in her time? Herself, too! — when I saw her, every trace of youth and elegance was gone. Her figure was clumsy, her eye heavy, her voice hoarse, and her spirits feverish; heavy eye and hoarse voice and feverish spirits referable to the same habit of indulgence in opiates. It was a complete metamorphosis. One could not, in her case, speak of difference between the present and the past, — between the literary drudge, compelled, out of an exhausted store, to coin volume after volume for a satiated public, and the intimate companion of Napoleon! The noisy repartee and anecdote which filled her small rooms, and in which she bore a most incessant part, could not deafen me to the recollections that would arise as I watched her cajoling one or two of those confident black-bearded haunters of every *salon*, in every line of whose countenances there is "*journaliste*" as clearly written as if the printer's devil had stamped it there. This was

only a few months before the contrasts of Madame d'Abrantes' lot were brought to a climax by her death in a hospital! When she was lying there — once the inmate of palaces — in almost her last hours, the nurse in attendance pointed her out to a party of visitors who were making the tour of the wards: — "What!" exclaimed the expiring woman, "is it *me* you would make a show of?" Surely there is no place for contrasts like Paris!

Except, perhaps, Versailles; whither — as if to complete the course of varieties — I was bound the very next day after I had looked on this saddening relic of the Empire. "Duller than the fat weed," indeed, must he be who can approach that magnificent pile for the first time as though it were any other common show-place. The most obvious contrasts of Versailles have been too recently exhausted by a master in sketching and speculation*, to be touched upon a second time. There is a cabinet picture of the palace and its

* In "The Paris Sketch Book, by Michael Angelo Titmarsh."

history in the following paragraph, worth a score of diluted pages of description :—

"You pass," says the writer, "from the railroad station through a long lonely suburb, with dusty rows of stunted trees on either side, and some few miserable beggars, idle boys, and ragged old women, under them. Behind the trees are gaunt mouldy houses, palaces once, where (in the days of the unbought grace of life) the cheap defence of nations gambled, ogled, swindled, intrigued: whence high-born duchesses used to issue, as in old times, to act as chamber-maids to lovely Du Barri; and mighty princes rolled away in gilt caroches, hot for the honour of lighting His Majesty to bed, or of presenting his stockings when he rose, or of holding his napkin when he dined. Tailors, chandlers, tinmen, wretched hucksters, and green-grocers, are now established in the mansions of the old peers; children are yelling at the doors, with mouths besmeared with bread-and-treacle; damp rags are hanging out of every one of the windows, steaming in the sun; oyster-shells, cabbage-stalks,

broken crockery, old papers, lie basking in the same cheerful light. A solitary water-cart goes jingling down the wide pavement, and spirts a feeble refreshment over the dusty, thirsty stones. After pacing for some time through such dismal streets, we *deboucher* on the grand place; and before us lies the palace dedicated to all the glories of France. In the midst of the great lonely plain, this famous residence of King Louis looks low and mean. Honoured pile! — time was when tall musqueteers, and gilded body guards, allowed none to pass the gate: fifty years ago, ten thousand drunken women from Paris broke through the charm; and now a tattered commissioner will conduct you through it for a penny, and lead you up to the sacred entrance of the palace."

True, to a cabbage-stalk, is this description; but it is not the whole of Versailles as I have known it. The wide, silent avenues — the forsaken and desolate-looking hotels — were there; but there were signs of life, as well as tokens of decay, at Versailles, when I first visited it in 1836.

If I would name the day of all my journeys in which fancy and feeling were the most pleasurably excited — in which admiration and the consciousness of distinction combined at once to call forth the affections and to gratify the vanity — I should recall the wintry afternoon of my arrival at Versailles. The magic of association dispensed with, there is enough to enchant in the spacious court of the château, circled with its pompous array of statues; — in the chapel, which I glanced at while passing from the court to the garden front, with its white and gold columns, and its ceiling flushed with every rich and voluptuous colour: the place of places for a Montespan to coquet with Heaven in! Nor was it a common pleasure to stroll among the bronzes and the melancholy fountains of the terrace; though the latter showed no sign of their occupation but a lingering ice-drop or two: — to watch the day as it declined beyond the formal but grand expanses of leafless wood, which, owing to the density of the masses of tiny boughs, took in the distance a dull purple colour any thing but un-

pleasing. The walk, too, among fallen leaves to the Trianons, would have been welcome — all sentimentality apart. But, to me, the charm of every place was doubled by hearing at every step, and before every statue, their proper traditions told me, by one whose noble name would of itself, among the traces of French royalty, have imparted a *prestige* to a less polished utterance of less choice reminiscences. Nor can I ever forget the evening which I passed in one of those "gaunt mouldy houses," where every picture had its history, and every toy its tale. And yet the house held objects of a far rarer interest and value than a "wilderness" of such pictures and toys. The old nobility of France was there to be seen, taking to itself fresh life and power and means of progress, by giving to its inheritors every advantage that severe and extensive and religious culture can ensure to grace, genius, and high birth. There might be seen all that is gentlest in breeding and most generous in feeling — in its kindness most simple, in its domestic courtesies warmest: — there might be found old familiar

faces, that had looked on while vicissitude and revolution threatened to destroy the family tree, now watching it put forth fresh fruits and blossoms. It is something to know that the days are gone when royal mistresses gorged their low-bred kindred with rich estates and offices of trust; when inconvenient alliances and monstrous crimes were put upon the same level, and got rid of by the same convenient *lettre de cachet.* But it is even better to be able to point to any portion of the rank and honour of Old France, which has come forth from the fire and whirlwind necessary to the sweeping away of all those dark and gross corruptions, — purged from the old follies and inanities of its order, and qualified to take its part — not merely with the gallant sword of its ancestors, but with a sound heart and a shrewd head — in any great events which Time and Change may be preparing for its country. There was life for French morals, then, at Versailles.

Doctors are disagreed whether or not there is life for French Art in the grand historical

galleries of the palace, where every conceivable painting and daub, in which national history or anecdotage, from the days of Clovis downwards, is illustrated, have been accumulated under the auspices of Louis Philippe. Certainly, a more bewildering labyrinth than the four miles or upwards which the conscientious "seer of every thing" has to thread, it were hard to conceive. I have loitered in every chamber (and in every century); — now among the old grim monarchs of the upper galleries,— now in the superb *Galerie des Glaces*, where, before I knew it, the hat was off my head, as though I had been entering a royal presence,— now in the splendid chamber of Louis Quatorze, before the wide and lofty royal couch, canopied with the richest of velvet, and hung with the most curious of tapestry ever embroidered by the nymphs of St. Cyr:—how large the bed, how little the *prie-Dieu* chair by the bed-side! I have yawned through the monotonous cabinets walled with battles by Vandermeulen, or curious bird's-eye views of the parks and gardens of the French palaces.

I have paid a closer homage to one or two of the separate portraits, in virtue of their subjects rather than their execution. One of these was a picture of La Vallière, dressed as Saint Cecilia, with an attendant angel and two winged cherubs (so my journal believes), in two pages' suits of velvet, on the cushion at her side; another was a portrait of my favourite Gresset, with "Vert-vert" to be read in every line of the face. I have admired a horrible Madame de Grignan, with tipsy cheeks and Widow Barnaby ringlets: a libel, no doubt, upon the real daughter of Madame de Sevigné. Portraits of royal children, too, have been always interesting to me, whether they be the pale pieces of formality in all the stiffness of coif and ruff embroidery which the Spanish masters turn out, or our own inimitable family of King Charles the First. One of the baby groups at Versailles represents Charles the Tenth of France and the Queen of Sardinia, the latter riding on a white dog. Who can look at the boy, and forget for what a life his babyhood was laid down? There are Louis Quatorzes and

Marie Antoinettes, too, without number: the loveliest of the latter in a blue dress with fur. But the series of pictures which, perhaps, amused me the most, represented the pastimes of the Prince of Condé at L'Isle Adam: — the hunting parties of His Highness; where the stag, turned out in a *pleasaunce* all terraces, canals, and staircases, only wanted a ribbon tied round his horns, and a garland by way of collar, to look perfectly *comme il faut;* — and the *petit soupers,* where, before a harpsichord, on which a table-cloth and covers, &c. were laid, a young lady in a *sacque* sate singing some ancient confection by Mondonville, in the shrillest of French voices.

From these illustrations of ancient Royalty— from these relics of days when life and amusement were sophisticated for the great and the noble to their highest possible refinement — it was a curious illustration of contrast to pass to the new gallery of battles opened by Louis Philippe. There, on gigantic canvasses, the painters of Young France have been commissioned to set forth the glories of the Empire;

tapestrying, as it were, a tawdry vestibule to still newer chambers and still newer times, in which the events of the Revolution of 1830 are displayed with a still greater flagrancy of raw colour! What a change is here — from the marble and bronze of Le Grand Monarque's chambers to the painted wood and Birmingham varnish of the Citizen-King's decorations! "Look!" said a wit one day, hastily dragging me onward with a shrug of contempt, "Look! it is all *papier-maché* now-a-days — king and all!"

The sculptor will hardly allow this to pass at Versailles without a charitable "Mais," — not merely called for by the wholesale encouragement given to his own art by the Citizen-King; but for the sake of a fair memorial which tells how patiently some of the monarch's family have studied as well as intimately loved it. I refer, of course, to the Princess Marie's sweet and thoughtful statue of La Pucelle, which keeps its place among the thousand figures that fill the long corridors, not merely as a monument of the beloved princess so soon called

away from all her pleasant tasks, but by its own grace and gentle dignity. Too much has been said of this figure to make description necessary — too much seen of it; since none of the thousand *statuettes* current do its feminine character justice. Perhaps, even the following stanzas, which *would come* after my first visit to the gallery, may be thought superfluous, a part though they be of my Versailles journal of 1837.

They imaged thee, of old, in casque and plume,
Bright Maid of France! — with wild and flashing eye,
And round lip wreath'd with scornful victory;
Like his who burns for conquest sure to come,
Fired with the future, careless all how Doom
Dogs Triumph like a slow-hound, sure and nigh.
Here thou art more a woman! — her low sigh
Heaves thy harsh cuirass: on thy brow, the gloom
Of joy departing broods, though temper'd well
With thought inspired — thy hand (unlearn'd its part)
Grasps the sharp sword with strangeness, not with fear:
Clings not one memory of thy forest cell,
With its clear warbling fountain, round thy heart —
One dream of love and peace, though war and death be near?

Or marks thine eye, unfaltering 'mid the haze
Of Glory's noon, wide fields of trampled corn,—
Brave blood like water poured, — fair homes forlorn,

While thy heart sickens at those stormy days,
And the shrill cry of anguish drowns the lays
Which hail thee all-victorious ;—or dost turn
With patient foresight towards awaiting Scorn,
The unjust tribunal, the grim faggot's blaze,
And blear-eyed Malice gibbering o'er thy grave?
Young Maid of France! What sculptor, wise and grey,
Whose practised hand obey'd a master's will
To marble thus thy life, thy sadness gave? —
"Fool! think'st thou aught but Woman could pourtray
A woman's deepest thoughts with such a gentle skill?"

It was impossible to be at Paris two years ago and move a step in the circle of artists without hearing some charming and gracious anecdote of the poor Princess Marie's amiability or genius. One of the prettiest has been recorded by Janin, though in language too embroidered for the trait he sets himself to relate. It chanced that Edgar Quinet, the high-toned but visionary author of the "Ahasuerus," was paying a visit one day to a lady of the royal household. At that time, says the *raconteur*, he was more depressed in spirits than usual, being on the eve of publishing his "Prometheus," and suffering under those misgivings which all

nonconformists like himself have felt when about to present a new work to the world, and which, though often merely arising from physical exhaustion, are as often misconstrued to mean a consciousness of hope long deferred, and effort unrequited. He was talking of his prospects and fortunes, and his new poem, in a dismal strain, when a young lady, very simply dressed, entered and joined in the conversation. She bade the author be of good cheer, confirming her encouragement by the dearest compliment of any, recalling to him some of the noble passages of his former compositions, which *she* had understood and remembered. "I will show you," she said, "how much I have admired your 'Ahasuerus:'" and she led the way to a *studio*, where she displayed to the poet's enraptured eye a work far more priceless than the Venus of the Tribune, or the Apollo of the Vatican, — four bas-reliefs from his own poem! He was hardly to be recalled from the reverie of unspeakable delight by her saying "They are yours!" and by his reading at the foot of the composition the signature of

Marie of Orleans! This tale, whether romance or reality, was told to me by the same person (and almost in the same breath) as enumerated the precautions taken by the Citizen King to avoid the assassination lying in wait for him. To hear coolly discussed in polite society the existence of a numerous body of frantic and exasperated men, utterly reckless of their own lives, — to hear recounted the changes made by Louis Philippe in his sleeping apartment every night, and in all the decorations and pieces of furniture in the chambers surrounding the one appointed for the monarch's rest,— was not the least curious illustration of the mixture of the familiar and the terrible which the *salons* of Paris display. It is possible that the existence of such fearful precautions may be as apocryphal as the above little Art-romance, in which a princess and a poet of Young France are the interlocutors. Real or false, however, there is no place for contrasts like Paris!

"A *papier-maché* king!" Nor will the architect say "Amen" to M. ——'s energetic burst of Carlism. Let his homages be ever so

enthusiastically devoted to Louis the Incomparable, as a palace decorator; when he looks at the splendour springing up in every corner of the French metropolis under the auspices of Louis Philippe, — the old churches, with their renovated altars and decorations — the widened streets — the new palace-like edifices which line the Boulevards—the completion of so many of the modern king-maker's designs for the beautification of his Paris,—he will say, that, though marble and bronze are gone, the life which gave them form is not dead; and is now working, though perhaps in more perishable materials, not so much for the monarch of France as for its great and busy people!

To come into our own peculiar parish, the musician has little need to lament the King who built Versailles, and chartered French Opera, and patronised Lulli, and comforted Lalande, and had La Vallière painted as St. Cecilia, and yawned (though too courteous to La Maintenon to yawn with an open mouth) through the long, long choruses of "Athalie," at St. Cyr. At Versailles, for example, among other of the

piles of building which stand about in the streets and avenues near the Grand Place, offsets of the Château, he will be shown the one formerly appropriated to the maintenance at Versailles of such powder and periwig sportmanship as the Prince of Condé's hunting parties, which so amused me. No "barking of uneasy hounds," however, is now to be heard there: if he pass within ear-shot, he runs a good chance of having his steps arrested by the freshest and most welcome of all musical sounds — a chord of children's, or young men's, voices, in perfect tune, heard from within the building. The dog-kennel is now a normal school; and where talbots bayed and greyhounds whined, the whole assemblage of *gamins*, who would else, perchance, be peopling with their mischief the silent avenue Titmarsh describes so well, are learning, for the good of their morals as well as their voices, the strict but not ungracious lore of *Do re mi sol fa*, &c., according to the Wilhem method.

I was right in saying there was life as well as contrast at Versailles. Yes: a new musical

power has been created in France, in the working of which lies more, far more, chance of its becoming a country really devoted to the Arts, than in the royal patronage of such a king as Louis Quartorze, whose munificence implies vassalage for the people! There is to me a particular charm in the agency by which this power was introduced into the government schools of education in France. The agent was the song-writer, whose sarcastic and pathetic appeals to the street-echoes of Paris were little less formidable to the constituted authorities than the "Ça ira" of the Republicans to the last generation of Bourbons who had sat on the throne; —whose few stanzas —

> "On parlera de sa gloire
> Sur la chaume bien long-temps"—

are a burial-strain sinking far deeper into French hearts than all the more pompous laudations of Napoleon, of which more pompous bards have been delivered. I love to think that the same Beranger whose sweetest and deepest songs were those vented under the rigours of imprisonment, and who gave to the

old tunes of the *boulevard* and the *guinguette* words little less dangerous in their pathos than the witticisms of Figaro had been in their Shylock-like* intensity, — could also do his

* While venturing an epithet which implies a parallel, I cannot but remember a delightful conversation, noted in one of my Paris journals. The speakers were a Byronist of the ultra-melancholy school, and one of the most distinguished novelists and dramatists of modern France, who possesses that knowledge so rare beyond Calais, an acquaintance with English literature and English character. Beginning with La Rachel, whose marvellous *galvanism* into life of the ancient French tragedy was just then an uppermost topic, dramatic things were more generally discussed. And it was with unusual interest that I listened to the statement of a speculation, longtime favourite with me, namely, that there was essentially as much tragedy among the Harpagons and Arnolphes of Molière, as the pompous grandeurs of Corneille, or the stilted tirades of Voltaire: or, to state the matter otherwise, that the passions common to all humanity might, though merely indicated by the masks and shows of a society as consummately polished as it was vitiated, excite a wearier sadness and a deeper interest than the remote crimes of the days of classical fable or the more shocking monstrosities of Young France. Though anxious to be contradicted, I ventured to mention the often-cited apportionment of *vices* to comedy, and crimes to tragedy: and, by way of further questioning the amount of impression producible by the former, quoted Charles Lamb's ingenious theory with regard

part to promote national settlement and national enjoyment hand-in-hand — could build up as well as pull down! I love to think that every childish chord from the dog-kennels at Versailles says as much for the progress of true liberty and religion in France as the most bitter rhyme ever launched against kings and priests in the days when France would no more away with their oppressive formalities.

It was Beranger, then, who, in 1819, introduced to M. Degerando, the head of the

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to "The Artificial Comedy of the last Century," in which he treats the comic stage as an Utopia, where the fence of words and the encounter of characters touch the sympathies very remotely. "Yes, but," was the answer, "you *had* a right and a wrong; — follies and crimes have been always kept distinct in your country. With us, a new murder and a new mode are alike vehemently discussed. Our comic dramatists are truer to the universal spirit of their epochs than your Congreves and Wycherleys. I cannot look at Molière's creatures as you seem to do at your Millamants and Witwouds. They illustrated the time — its heartless love-treaties, its conventional morals, its portentous hypocrisy; and when profligacy and oppression at last stirred up the many to measure themselves against the few, had we not a Figaro? Do you not call his great soliloquy in the Fifth Act tragedy?"

"Société pour l'Instruction élémentaire," M. Wilhem — then a comparatively young and unknown musician — whose admirable method has at once taken root and spread wide over all the kingdom of France, and, happily for us, been recently introduced into our own country with fair auspices of permanence.*

* The Educational Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council must be convinced that the right time had arrived for considering Art as a branch of education, by the rapidity with which the singing classes opened under their sanction have been filled and multiplied. They must also feel, by the satisfactory results of a small portion of attention given to the boys of the training school at Battersea, that the right man, as well as the right time, was come. It is more like the fulfilment of a dream, indeed, than an occurrence of daily life, to see the sensible and substantial Government of England so zealously recognising Music as an object of care and concern. It was more, too, than any enthusiast had a right to expect, that the task of adapting and arranging M. Wilhem's method should have fallen into the hands of one so intelligent and so self-postponing as my friend Mr. Hullah. His version of the foreign manuals seems to me at once executed with all the modesty of true talent, and with all the comprehensive acuteness which has caught the national differences between England and France, and provided for them fully and clearly.

So far and so widely has its fame spread, even here, in a short period, that to detail its leading features and plans, is needless; suffice it to say, that in France its success has been tested in schools of all kinds and of "all orders." I have heard charity children, at a tender age, singing difficult musical compositions at sight, with a certainty and clearness beyond the reach of the generality of the English profession, and totally at variance with the slightest idea of empiricism. I have seen, also, the pale, greasy, grimy operatives of Paris, when their day's work was over, thronging together eagerly, in bodies of one or two hundred, not only to receive instruction in an art which was to amuse them as innocently, at least, as the Sunday dance, on the strength of which France so long set itself forth as an Arcadia of gaiety—but also to lay up self-respect by having their capacities for learning elicited, and that in a manner which brought them on a neutral ground with those clothed with purple and fine linen. It is surely no light service done to humanity, when the great classes of society,

without displacement, are taught that they have not only senses, but spirits, in common.

I can conceive no spectacle of a more healthy interest than one of the evening meetings at the Halle aux Draps, a large building not far from the Palais Royal — open for one or other course of gratuitous instruction every evening in the week. The class I heard take its lesson there, under the tuition of an indefatigable and excellent professor — M. Hubert, who has acted as M. Wilhem's viceroy in diffusing his method through the different public institutions of Paris, amounted to two hundred men, or thereabouts. Some of them were as old as sixty, and may have heard The Marseillaise sung, and seen The Carmagnole danced round the guillotine; some of them of that mischievous age which is more mischievous, as M. Frégier and other statisticians will assure us, among the urchins of Paris than the growing boys of any other town. There was, perhaps, none of the shirtless ferocity of St. Giles's, because — though the *point-device* days of French breeding went out with the days of nobles and villains — the

roughest *canaille* of Paris can put on good behaviour in a way not to be assumed by English immobility; and wear their very rags — Robert Macaire has shown us how like gentlemen! But — the extreme of positive want and beggary excepted — there was a representative of every class, from the *décrotteur* and the Seine boatman up to the small shopkeeper: — cut-away coat and dirty blouse not thinking themselves the worse for being rubbed up against each other.

The French take kindly to such rigorous mechanical training as M. Wilhem's method demands, and as none adopting it can escape from. I have often been amused as —— has described to me, at the very identical Versailles school where we started, the children, at a word of command, spitting in platoon to clean their slates, or wiping their pens on their hair. But, whatever be his generic aptitude for discipline, a man who has all day been handling a book-binder's hammer, or a shoemaker's awl, will not go gratuitously through another hour of routine, if it be only to him a

dry piece of mere handicraft. The men I saw receiving their instruction, not only conned their task zealously while their reading lesson was going on — (the Wilhem lessons are *read* before they are sung) — but threw out their voices, in scale or interval or exercise, with such a contagious zeal as animates every party of seekers engaged in mountain climbing or any other task of acquisition or mastery; — and which seems in every effort to exclaim "*when* we get to the top!"

To believe that two hours, thus redeemed from the week, can pass over, for the ignorant and demoralised, without some amount of permanent benefit, would be surely a churlish suspiciousness. Though the miracle of Orpheus be the starting point of every itinerant lecturer, and be pushed to a fanatical application by those who imagine that Music is "meat, clothes, and fire," and, in their immoderate ecstasy at the prospect of a nation full of Catalanis and Rubinis, anticipate the return of a golden age of prosperity and refinement, — we are not therefore to turn our

backs on the old fable utterly. Whether the amount of artistic result among the people be something or nothing, it is little matter, as regards their happiness: we are to look at the amount of better feelings awakened — of coarse appetites displaced by gentler desires; — at the amount of satisfaction given to those cravings which vex man's heart, however he be clad — without the gift bringing on the fever of discontent and satiety. It was to me a reply in full to the often-repeated question of "Cui bono?" raised on all such occasions, to learn, during my last visit to Paris, in November 1840, that, night after night, while the Boulevards and the Faubourgs were filled with a population streaming hither and thither, ripe for disorder, there was no perceptible diminution of the workmen's singing classes — no recorded instance of any body turning its knowledge of "*Do re mi*" to the peculiarly good execution of "La Marseillaise," or other of the hymns of war and disorder then so largely circulated. The worn-out complaints against Music, as a demoralising art, can have

no place at least in Paris, unless a chorus can be proved to be as foul in its excitement as the *cancan;* or an artisan be thought worse employed while making melody for himself, than while catching up the last equivocal words (not tune) of the newest *vaudeville.* And, that the pleadings of a *fanatico* — his eyes fixed on home the while he pleads — may not be thought wholly extravagant, I shall take leave to quote from an author whose knowledge of the dangerous classes of Paris is minute enough to exempt his opinion from the charge of haste and visionary enthusiasm.

"The singing classes," says M. Frégier*, "have a relation to the amusements of the people; and for this reason it is, perhaps, that they have been judged less favourably than those courses of instruction which have reference to objects purely utilitarian. It has been said that they are not in harmony with the condition of those for whom they are designed. This objection is not a conclusive one, for the most brilliant airs of our operas are daily hawked in

* "Des Classes Dangeeuses," &c. par H. A. Frégier.

our streets and sung in our highways. These airs, caught flying (if we may so express ourselves) by the workmen, are repeated by them in their workshops and garrets. Why forbid them access to the punctuated music and accentuated harmonies of scientific composition, when you cannot prevent their seizing and rendering, often with great taste, the airs which float through the works of our greatest masters? The municipal administration, depend upon it, is walking in a wise direction, — and let us offer no obstacle!"

Taking, then, — and that purposely, — the fruits to be expected from the diffusion of sound musical knowledge at the lowest value, I cannot but conceive that moral progress must accrue — an increase of decency — a cultivation of patience — an opening of the heart to those enjoyments which, ministering to Fancy as much as appetite, have a tendency to raise and refine the human creature. But let this be once granted, and an artistic result is at the same moment implied, — if not for the people, for a class above them. When an art is

neither loved nor sought because of Fashion, but from the honest and deep satisfactions it brings in its train, — and when subordination and patient labour are submitted to for no showy ulterior purposes of exhibition, but for the sake of mastering a truth, whatever be its forms, and of finding enjoyment in its possession, a basis is created on which Genius builds solidly. Well has a French writer said, "On n'arrive à des chefs-d'œuvre que par la route de la vertu." — "L'oubli de ces principes nous a précipités dans le chaos." * — If I am right in ascribing the profitless struggles of M. Berlioz to the influences of a false and demoralised state of society — where the human spirit, at once aspiring and impatient of labour, forces, at best, a spasmodic flight upwards, only to fall the deeper; — if I am right in believing that Music of the highest order, in France, labours under the mass of pretended enthusiasm which critics heap upon it, — and that creation is rendered abortive by the hectic fever of corruption in the midst

* Aimè Martin—"De l'Education des Mères de Familles."

of which it is carried on; — these unpretending operations, if ever so little they raise the tone of society — whatsoever be its order — cannot fail to exercise a counter-influence. And, technically to speak, the direction of this may, in some measure, be foreseen.

A day will come when the application of these noble bodies of trained choralists must engage public attention. At present, the vocal knowledge of France, save in theatrical music, appears to me, as far as I have any means of knowing, very meagre. Much is said about Palestrina, — little of his music is heard; and the magnificent stores of Handel are sealed, as yet, to the critics and amateurs. Any one talking of "Israel in Egypt" will be answered with a confident "Oui, Le Messie — c'est son chef-d'œuvre." I am not sure, even, that this holy work is not by some secretly classed with Mehul's "Joseph," which was brought out at "L'Opera Comique," or Rossini's "Mosé," which introduced the miracles of the Red Sea and the Desert — the "thick darkness," and the plague of "fire mingled

with rain" — to the frequenters of L'Académie Royale! A clearer light must be thrown on all these matters, — truer standards of distinction introduced, — and researches, not into the dictionary, but into the library of sacred compositions, instituted, in proportion as a singing people requires something to sing. Once thoroughly taught, it will become impossible to satisfy the multitude with what is flimsy and second-rate. And when the study of those master-works shall reflect upon the creative musical genius of France, the reflection will also convey a sign, I firmly believe, of a healthier and happier state of society. If it be a dream, it is, at all events, a harmless one, to imagine, — that whereas the old Italians came to Art through Religion, the young French may come to Religion through Art; and the people humanise the nobility, in recompence for the corruption which the nobility formerly introduced and perpetuated among the people.

THE END.

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